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THE INDIAN MOTHER.*

BY MRS. JAMESON.

There is a comfort in the strength of love,

Making that pang endurable, which else

Would overset the brain—or break the heart.

Wordsworth.

The monuments which human art has raised to human pride or power may decay with that power, or survive to mock that pride; but sooner or later they perish—their place knows them not. In the aspect of a ruin, however imposing in itself, and however magnificent or dear the associations connected with it, there is always something sad and humiliating, reminding us how poor and how frail are the works of man, how unstable his hopes, and how limited his capacity compared to his aspirations! But when man has made to himself monuments of the works of God; when the memory of human affections, human intellect, human power, is blended with the immutable features of nature, they consecrate each other, and both endure together to the end. In a state of high civilization, man trusts to the record of brick and marble—the pyramid, the column, the temple, the tomb:

"Then the bust
And altar rise—then sink again to dust."

In the earlier stages of society, the isolated rock—the mountain, cloud-encircled—the river, rolling to its ocean-home—

* This little tale is founded on a striking incident related in Humboldt's narrative. The facts remain unaltered.

the very stars themselves-were endued with sympathies, and constituted the first, as they will be the last, witnesses and records of our human destinies and feelings. The glories of the Parthenon shall fade into oblivion; but while the heights of Thermopylæ stand, and while a wave murmurs in the gulph of Salamis, a voice shall cry aloud to the universe-" Freedom and glory to those who can dare to die!--woe and everlasting infamy to him who would enthral the unconquerable spirit!" The Coliseum with its sanguinary trophies is crumbling to decay; but the islet of Nisida, where Brutus parted with his Portia—the steep of Leucadia, still remain fixed as the foundations of the earth; and lasting as the round world itself shall be the memories that hover over them! As long as the waters of the Hellespont flow between Sestos and Abydos, the fame of the love that perished there shall never pass away. A traveller, pursuing his weary way through the midst of an African desert—a barren, desolate, and almost boundless solitude—found a gigantic sculptured head, shattered and halfburied in the sand; and near it the fragment of a pedestal, on which these words might be with pain deciphered: I am Ozymandias, King of kings; look upon my works, ye mighty ones, and despair!" Who was Ozymandias?-where are now his works?-what bond of thought or feeling links his past with our present? The Arab, with his beasts of burthen, tramples unheeding over these forlorn vestiges of human art and human grandeur. In the wildest part of the New Continent, hidden amid the depths of interminable forests, there stands a huge rock, hallowed by a tradition so recent that the man is not yet grey-headed who was born its contemporary; but that rock, and the tale which consecrates it, shall carry down to future ages a deep lesson—a moral interest lasting as itself-however the aspect of things and the conditions of people change around it. Henceforth no man shall gaze on it with careless eye; but each shall whisper to his own bosom—"What is stronger than love in a mother's heart?-what more fearful than power wielded by ignorance?

—or what more immentable than the abuse of a beneficent mane to purposes of selfish crucky?"

Those vast regions which occupy the central part of South America, stretching from Guinea to the foot of the Andes, overspread with gigantic and primeval forests, and watered by mighty rivers—those solitary wilds where man appears unessential in the scale of creation, and the traces of his power are few and far between-have lately occupied much of the attention of Europeans; partly from the extraordinary events and unexpected revolutions which have convulsed the nations round them; and partly from the researches of enterprising travellers who have penetrated into their remotest districts. But till within the last twenty years these wild regions have been unknown, except through the means of the Spanish and Pertuguese priests, settled as missionaries along the banks of the Orinoco and the Paraguay. The men thus devoted to utter banishment from all intercourse with civilized life, are generally Franciscan or Capuchin friars, born in the Spanish Colonies. Their pious duties are sometimes voluntary, and sometimes imposed by the superiors of their order; in either ease their destiny appears at first view deplorable, and their self-sacrifice sublime; yet, when we recollect that these poor monks generally exchanged the monotonous solitude of the cloister for the magnificent loneliness of the boundless woods and far spreading savannahs, the sacrifice appears less terrible; even where accompanied by suffering, privation, and oecasionally by danger. When these men combine with their religious zeal some degree of understanding and enlightened benevolence, they have been enabled to enlarge the sphere of knowledge and civilization, by exploring the productions and geography of these unknown regions; and by collecting into villages and humanizing the manners of the native tribes, who seem strangely to unite the fiercest and most abhorred traits of savage life, with some of the gentlest instincts of our common nature. But when it has happened that

these priests have been men of narrow minds and tyrannical tempers, they have on some occasions fearfully abused the authority entrusted to them; and being removed many thousand miles from the European settlements and the restraint of the laws, the power they have exercised has been as far beyond control as the calamities they have caused have been beyond all remedy and all relief.

Unfortunately for those who were trusted to his charge, Father Gomez was a missionary of this character. He was a Franciscan friar of the order of Observance, and he dwelt in the village of San Fernando, near the source of the Orinoco, whence his authority extended as president overseveral missions in the neighbourhood of which San Fernando was the capital. The temper of this man was naturally cruel and despotic; he was wholly uneducated, and had no idea, no feeling, of the true spirit of christian benevolence: in this respect, the savages whom he had been sent to instruct and civilize were in reality less savage and less ignorant than himself.

Among the passions and vices which Father Gomez had brought from his cell in the convent of Angostara, to spread contamination and oppression through his new domain, were pride and avarice; and both were interested in increasing the number of his converts, or rather, of his slaves. In spite of the wise and humane law of Charles the Third, prohibiting the conversion of the Indian natives by force, Gomez, like others of his brethren in the more distant missions, often accomplished his purpose by direct violence. He was accustomed to go, with a party of his people, and lie in wait near the hordes of unreclaimed Indians: when the men were absent, he would forcibly seize on the women and children, bind them, and bring them off in triumph to his village. There, being baptized and taught to make the sign of the cross, they were called Christians, but in reality were slaves. In general, the women thus detained pined away and died; but the children became accustomed to their new mode of life, forgot their woods, and

paid to their Christian master a willing and blind obedience; thus in time they became the oppressors of their own people. Father Gomez called these incursions, la conquista espiritual—the conquest of souls.

One day he set off on an expedition of this nature, attended by twelve armed Indians; and after rowing some leagues up the river Guaviare, which flows into the Orinoco, they perceived, through an opening in the trees, and at a little distance from the shore, an Indian hut. It is the custom of these people to live isolated in families; and so strong is their passion for solitude, that when collected into villages they frequently build themselves a little cabin at a distance from their usual residence, and retire to it, at certain seasons, for days together. The cabin of which I speak was one of these solitary villasif I may so apply the word. It was constructed with peculiar neatness, thatched with palm leaves, and overshadowed with cocoa trees and laurels; it stood alone in the wilderness, embowered in luxuriant vegetation, and looked like the chosen abode of simple and quiet happiness. Within this hut a young Indian woman (whom I shall call Guahiba, from the name of her tribe) was busied in making cakes of the cassava root, and preparing the family meal, against the return of her hushand, who was fishing at some distance up the river; her eldest child, about five or six years old, assisted her; and from time to time, while thus employed, the mother turned her eyes, beaming with fond affection, upon the playful gambols of two little infants, who, being just able to crawl alone, were rolling together on the ground, laughing and crowing with all their might.

Their food being nearly prepared, the Indian woman looked towards the river, impatient for the return of her husband. But her bright dark eyes, swimming with eagerness and affectionate solicitude, became fixed and glazed with terror when, instead of him she so fondly expected, she beheld the attendants of Father Gomez, creeping stealthily along the side of the thicket towards her cabin. Instantly aware of her danger (for the nature and object of these incursions were the

dread of all the country round), she attened a pieroing shrisk, snatched up her infants in her arms, and calling on the other to follow, rushed from the hut towards the forest. As she had considerably the start of her pursuers, she would probably have escaped, and have hidden herself effectually in its tangled depths, if her precious burthen had not impeded her flight; but thus encumbered she was easily overtaken. Her eldest child, fleet of foot and wily as the young jaguar, escaped to earry to the wretched father the news of his hereavement, and neither father nor child were ever more beheld in their former baunts.

Meantime, the Indians seized upon Guahiba—bound her, tied her two children together, and dragged her down to the river, where Father Gomez was sitting in his canoe, waiting the issue of the expedition. At the sight of the captives his eyes sparkled with a cruel triumph; he thanked his patron saint that three more souls were added to his community; and then, heedless of the tears of the mother, and the cries of her shildren, he commanded his followers to row back with all speed to San Fernando.

There Guahiba and ber infants were placed in a hut under the guard of two Indians; some food was given to her, which she at first refused, but afterwards, as if on reflection, ascepted. A young Indian girl was then sent to her-a captive convert of her own tribe, who had not yet quite forgotten her native language. She tried to make Guahiba comprehend that in this village she and her children must remain during the rest of their lives, in order that they might go to Heaven after they were dead. Guahiba listened, but understood nothing of what was addressed to her; nor could she be made to conceive for what purpose she was torn from her husband and her home, nor why she was to dwell for the remainder of her life among a strange people, and against her will. During that night she remained tranquil, watching over ber infants as they slumbered by her side; but the moment the dawn appeared she took them in her arms and ran off to the

She was immediately brought back; but no sooner were the eyes of her keepers turned from her than she snatched up her children, and again fled; ---again---and again! At every new attempt she was punished with more and more severity; she was kept from food, and at length repeatedly and cruelly beaten. In vain!-apparently she did not even understand why she was thus treated; and one instinctive idea alone, the desire of escape, seemed to possess her mind and govern all her movements. If her oppressors only turned from her, or looked another way, for an instant, she invariably caught up her children and ran off towards the forest. Father Gomez was at length wearied by what he termed her "blind obstinacy;" and, as the only means of securing all three, he took measures to separate the mother from her children, and resolved to convey Guahiba to a distant mission, whence she should never find her way back either to them or to her heme.

In pursuance of this plan, poor Guahiba, with her hands, tied behind her, was placed in the bow of a cance. Father Gomez seated himself at the helm, and they rowed away.

The few travellers who have visited these regions agree in describing a phenomenon, the cause of which is still a mystery to geologists; and which imparts to the lonely depths of these unappropriated and unviolated shades an effect intensely and indescribably mouraful. The granita rocks which border the river, and extend far into the contiguous woods, assume strange, fantastic shapes; and are covered with a black increstation, or deposit, which contrasted with the snow-white form of the waves breaking on them, below, and the pale lichens which spring from their crevices and creep along their surface above, give these shores an aspect perfectly funereal. Between these melancholy rocks—so high and so steep that a lending-place scident occurred for leagues together—the cance of Father Gomes slowly glided, though urged against the stream by eight robust Indians.

The unhappy Guahiba sat at first perfectly unmoved, and

apparently amazed and stunned by her situation; she did not comprehend what they were going to do with her; but after a while she looked up towards the sun, then down upon the stream; and preceiving, by the direction of the one and the course of the other, that every stroke of the oar carried her farther and farther from her beloved and helpless children; her husband, and her native home, her countenance was seen to change and assume a fearful expression. As the possibility of escape, in her present situation, had never once occurred to her captors, she had been very slightly and carelessly bound. She watched her opportunity, burst the withes on her arms, with a sudden effort flung herself overboard, and dived under the waves; but in another moment she rose again at a considerable distance, and swam to the shore. The current, being rapid and strong, carried her down to the base of a dark granite rock which projected into the stream; she climbed it with fearless agility, stood for an instant on its summit, looking down upon her tyrants, then plunged into the forest, and was lost to sight.

Father Gomez, beholding his victim thus unexpectedly escape him, sat mute and thunderstruck for some moments, unable to give utterance to the extremity of his rage and astonishment. When, at length, he found voice, he commanded his Indians to pull with all their might to the shore; then to pursue the poor fugitive, and bring her back to him, dead or alive.

Guahiba, meantime, while strength remained to break her way through the tangled wilderness, continued her flight; but soon exhausted and breathless, with the violence of her exertions, she was obliged to relax in her efforts, and at length sunk down at the foot of a huge laurel tree, where she concealed herself, as well as she might, among the long, interwoven grass. There, crouching and trembling in her lair, she heard the voices of her persecutors hallowing to each other through the thicket. She would probably have escaped but for a large mastiff which the Indians had with them, and which

scented her out in her hiding-place. The moment she heard the dreaded animal snuffing in the air, and tearing his way through the grass, she knew she was lost. The Indians came up. She attempted no vain resistance; but, with a sullen passiveness, suffered herself to be seized and dragged to the shore.

When the merciless priest beheld her, he determined to inflict on her such discipline as he thought would banish her children from her memory, and cure her for ever of her passion for escaping. He ordered her to be stretched upon that granite rock where she had landed from the canoe, on the summit of which she had stood, as if exulting in her flight,—
THE ROCK OF THE MOTHER, as it has ever since been denominated—and there flogged till she could scarcely move or speak. She was then bound more securely, placed in the canoe, and carried to Javita, the seat of a mission far up the river.

It was near sunset when they arrived at this village, and the inhabitants were preparing to go to rest. Guahiba was deposited for the night in a large barn-like building, which served as a place of worship, a public magazine, and, occasionally, as a barrack. Father Gomez ordered two or three Indians of Javita to keep guard over her, alternately relieving each other through the night, and then went to repose himself after the fatigues of his voyage. As the wretched captive neither resisted nor complained, Father Gomez flattered himself that she was now reduced to submission. Little could he fathom the bosom of this fond mother! He mistook for stupor, or resignation, the calmness of a fixed resolve. In absence, in bonds, and in torture, her heart throbbed with but one feeling; one thought alone possessed her whole soul:ber children-her children-and still her children!

Among the Indians appointed to watch her was a youth, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, who, perceiving that her arms were miserably bruised by the stripes she had received, and that she suffered the most acute agony from the savage tightness with which the cords were drawn, let fall an exclamation of pity in the language of her tribe. Quick she seized the moment of feeling, and addressed him as one of her people.

"Guahibo," she said, in a whispered tone, "thou speakest my language, and doubtless thou art my brother! Wilt thou see me perish without pity, O son of my people? Ah, cut these bonds which enter into my flesh! I faint with pain! I die!"

The young man heard, and, as if terrified, removed a few paces from her and kept silence. Afterwards, when his companions were out of sight, and he was left alone to watch, he approached, and said, "Guahiba!—our fathers were the same, and I may not see thee die; but if I out these bonds, white man will flog me:—wilt thou be content if I loosen them, and give thee ease?" And as he spoke, he stooped and loosened the thongs on her wrists and arms; she smiled upon him languidly, and appeared satisfied.

Night was now coming on. Guahiba dropped her head on her bosom, and closed her eyes, as if exhausted by weariness. The young Indian, believing that she slept, after some hesitation laid himself down on his mat. His companions were already slumbering in the porch of the building, and all was still.

Then Guahiba raised her head. It was night—dark night—without moon or star. There was no sound, except the breathing of the sleepers around her, and the humming of the mosquitoes. She listened for some time with her whole soul; but all was silence. She then gnawed the loosened thougs asunder with her teeth. Her hands once free, she released her feet; and when the morning came she had disappeared. Search was made for her in every direction, but in vain; and Father Gomez, baffled and wrathful, returned to his village.

The distance between Javita and San Fernando, where Guahiba had left her infants, is twenty-five leagues in a straight line. A fearful wilderness of gigantic forest trees, and intermingling underwood, separated these two missions;—a savage

and awful solitude, which, probably, since the beginning of the world, had never been trodden by human foot. All communication was carried on by the river; and there lived not a man, whether Indian or European, bold enough to have attempted the route along the shore. It was the commencement of the rainy season. The sky, obscured by clouds, seldom revealed the sun by day, and neither moon nor gleam of twinkling star by night. The rivers had overflowed, and the lowlands were inundated. There was no visible object to direct the traveller; no shelter, no defence, no aid, no guide. Was it Providence—was it the strong instinct of maternal love, which led this courageous woman through the depths of the pathless woods-where rivulets, swollen to torrents by the rains, intercepted her at every step; where the thorny lianas, twining from tree to tree, opposed an almost impenetrable barrier; where the mosquitoes hung in clouds upon her path; where the jaguar and the alligator lurked to devour her; where the rattle-snake and the water-serpent lay coiled up in the damp grass, ready to spring at her; where she had no food to support her exhausted frame, but a few berries, and the large black ants which build their nests on the trees? How directed-how sustained-cannot be told: the poor woman herself could not tell. All that can be known with any certainty is, that the fourth rising sun beheld her at San Fernando; a wild, and wasted, and fearful object; her feet swelled and bleeding—her hands torn—her body covered with wounds, and emaciated with famine and fatigue; -but once more near her children!

For several hours she hovered round the hut in which she had left them, gazing on it from a distance with longing eyes and a sick heart, without daring to advance: at length she perceived that all the inhabitants had quitted their cottages to attend vespers; then she stole from the thicket, and approached, with faint and timid steps, the spot which contained her heart's treasures. She entered, and found her infants left alone, and playing together on a mat: they sereamed at her

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appearance, so changed was she by suffering; but when she called them by name, they knew her tender voice, and stretched out their little arms towards her. In that moment, the mother forgot all she had endured—all her anguish, all her fears. everything on earth but the objects which blessed her eyes. She sat down between her children—she took them on her knees-she clasped them in an agony of fondness to her bosom -she covered them with kisses-she shed torrents of tears on their little heads, as she hugged them to her. Suddenly she remembered where she was, and why she was there: new terrors seized her; she rose up hastily, and, with her babies in her arms, she staggered out of the cabin-fainting, stumbling, and almost blind with loss of blood and inanition. She tried to reach the woods, but too feeble to sustain her burthen, which yet she would not relinquish, her limbs trembled, and sank beneath her. At this moment an Indian, who was watching the public oven, perceived her. He gave the alarm by ringing a bell, and the people rushed forth, gathering round Guahiba with fright and astonishment. They gazed upon her as if upon an apparition, till her sobs, and imploring looks, and trembling and wounded limbs, convinced them that she yet lived, though apparently nigh to death. They looked upon her in silence, and then at each other; their savage bosoms were touched with commiseration for her sad plight, and with admiration, and even awe, at this unexampled heroism of maternal love.

While they hesitated, and none seemed willing to seize her, or to take her children from her, Father Gomez, who had just landed on his return from Javita, approached in haste, and commanded them to be separated. Guahiba clasped her children closer to her breast, and the Indians shrunk back.

"What!" thundered the monk, "will ye suffer this woman to steal two precious souls from heaven?—two members from our community? See ye not, that while she is suffered to approach them, there is no salvation for either mother or children?—part them, and instantly!"

The Indians, accustomed to his ascendancy, and terrified at his voice, tore the children of Guahiba once more from her feeble arms: she uttered nor word nor cry, but sunk in a swoon upon the earth.

While in this state, Father Gomez, with a cruel mercy, ordered her wounds to be carefully dressed: her arms and legs were swathed with cotton bandages; she was then placed in a canoe, and conveyed to a mission, far, far off, on the river Esmeralda, beyond the Upper Orinoco. She continued in a state of exhaustion and torpor during the voyage; but after being taken out of the boat and carried inland, restoratives brought her back to life, and to a sense of her situation. When she perceived, as reason and consciousness returned. that she was in a strange place, unknowing how she was brought there-among a tribe who spoke a language different from any she had ever heard before, and from whom, therefore, according to Indian prejudices, she could hope nor aid nor pity;—when she recollected that she was far from her beloved children;—when she saw no means of discovering the bearing or the distance of their abode—no clue to guide her back to it—then, and only then, did the mother's heart yield to utter despair: and thenceforward refusing to speak or to move, and obstinately rejecting all nourishment, thus she died.

The boatman, on the river Atabapo, suspends his oar with a sigh as he passes the rock of the mother. He points it out to the traveller, and weeps as he relates the tale of her sufferings and her fate. Ages hence, when these solitary regions have become the seats of civilization, of power, and intelligence; when the pathless wilds, which poor Guahiba traversed in her anguish, are replaced by populous cities, and smiling gardens, and pastures, and waving harvests,—still that dark rock shall stand, frowning o'er the stream; tradition and history shall preserve its name and fame; and when even the pyramids, those vast vain monuments to human pride, have passed away, it shall endure, to carry down to the end of the world the memory of the Indian Mother.

THE STORM-LIGHTS

OF ANZASCA.

BY LEIGH RITCHIE.

THESE lights are wholly different both in appearance and situation from the ignis fatuus. The main road from the Lago Maggiore to the western parts of Switzerland at one time ran through the Valley of Anzasca; and it was once my fortune to be detained all night at a cottage in one of its wildest defiles, by a storm which rendered my horses ungovernable. While leaning upon a bench, and looking with drowsy curiosity towards the window—for there was no bed except my host's, of which I did not choose to deprive him-I saw a small faint light among the rocks in the distance. I at first conceived that it might proceed from a cottage-window; but, remembering that that part of the mountain was wholly uninhabited, and indeed uninhabitable, I roused myself, and, calling one of the family, inquired what it meant. spoke, the light suddenly vanished; but in about a minute reappeared in another place, as if the bearer had gone round some intervening rock. The storm at that time raged with a fury which threatened to blow our hut, with its men and horses, over the mountains; and the night was so intensely dark that the edges of the horizon were wholly undistinguishable from the sky.

"There it is again!" said I. "What is that, in the name of God?"

"It is Lelia's lamp!" cried the young man eagerly, who

was a son of our host. "Awake, father! Ho, Batista!—Vittorio! Lelia is on the mountains!" At these cries the whole family sprung up from their lair at once, and, crowding round the window, fixed their eyes upon the light, which continued to appear, although at long intervals, for a considerable part of the night. When interrogated as to the nature of this mystic lamp, the cettagers made no scruple of telling meall they knew, on the sole condition that I should be silent when it appeared, and leave them to mark uninterruptedly the spot where it rested.

To render my story intelligible, it is necessary to say that the minerali and farmers form two distinct classes in the Valley of Anzasca. The occupation of the former, when pursued as a profession, is reckoned disreputable by the other inhabitants, who obtain their living by regular industry; and indeed the manners of the minerali offer some excuse for what might otherwise be reckoned an illiberal prejudice. They are addicted to drinking, quarrelsome, overbearing—at one moment rich, and at another starving; and in short they are subject to all the calamities, both moral and physical, which beset men who can have no dependance on the product of their labour; ranking in this respect with gamesters, authors, and other vagabonds.

They are, notwithstanding, a fine race of men—brave, hardy, and often handsome. They spend freely what they win lightly; and, if one day they sleep off their hunger, lying like wild animals basking in the sun, the next, if fortune has been propitious, they swagger about, gallant and gay, the lords of the valley. Like the sons of God, the minerali sometimes make love to the daughters of men; and, although they seldom possess the hand, they occasionally touch the heart, of the gentle maidens of Anzasca. If their wooing is unsuccessful, there are commudes still wilder than their own, whose arms are always open to receive the desperate and the brave. They change the scene, and betake themselves to the highways when nights are dark and travellers unwary; or they enlist under

the banners of those regular banditti, who rob in thousands, and whose booty is a province or a kingdom.

Francesco Martelli was the handsomest gold-seeker in the valley. He was wild, it is true, but that was the badge of his tribe; and he made up for this by so many good qualities, that the farmers themselves—at least such of them as had not marriageable daughters—delighted in his company. Francesco could sing ballads so sweetly and mournfully, that the old dames leant back in the chimney-corner to weep while he sung. He had that deep and melancholy voice which, when once heard, lingers in the ear, and when heard again, however unexpectedly, seems like a longing realized.

There was only one young lass in the valley who had never heard the songs of Francesco. All the others, seen or unseen, on some pretext or other, had gratified their curiosity. The exception was Lelia, the daughter of one of the richest farmers in Anzasca.

Lelia was very young, being scarcely sixteen; but in her quality of an only daughter, with a dowry in expectancy equal to more than one thousand Austrian livres, * she attracted considerable observation. Her face, on minute inspection, was beautiful to absolute perfection; but her figure, although symmetrical, was so petite, and her manner so shy and girlish, that she was thought of more as a child than a young woman. The "heiress of old Niccoli" was the designation made use of, when parents would endeavour to awaken the ambition of their sons, as they looked forward to what might be some years hence: but Lelia, in her own person, was a nonentity.

Her mother had died in giving her birth; and for many a year the life of the child had been preserved, or rather her death prevented, by what seemed a miracle. Even after the disease, whatever it might have been, had yielded to the sleep-less care of her father, she remained in that state which is described by the expression "not unwell," rather than in perfect

^{*} The Austrian lira is equal to about eight-pence halfpenny English.

health; although the most troublesome memento that remained of her illness was nothing more than a nervous timidity, which in a more civilized part of the country might have passed for delicacy of feeling.

Besides being in some degree shut out from the society of her equals by this peculiarity of her situation, she was prevented from enjoying it by another. While her body languished, the cultivation of her mind had advanced. Music, to which she was passionately attached, paved the way for poetry; and poetry, in spite of the doctrines of a certain school you have in England, unfitted her for association with the ignorant and unrefined.

That Lelia, therefore, had never sought to hear the ballads of Francesco, was occasioned, it may readily be believed, by nothing more than an instinctive terror, mingled with the dislike with which the name of one of the ruffian minerali inspired her; and, in truth, she listened to the tales that from time to time reached her ear, of the young gold-seeker, with somewhat of the vague and distant interest with which we attend to descriptions of a beautiful but wild and cruel animal of another hemisphere.

There came one at last, however, to whom poor Lelia listened. She was sitting alone, according to her usual custom, at the bottom of her father's garden, singing, while she plied her knitting-needle, in the soft, low tone peculiar to her voice, and beyond which it had no compass. The only fence of the garden at this place was a belt of shrubs, which enriched the border of the deep ravine it overlooked. At the bottom of this ravine flowed the river, rapid and yet sullen; and beyond, scarcely distant two hundred yards, a range of precipitous cliffs shut in the horizon.

The wild and desolate aspect of the scene was overshadowed and controlled, as it were, by the stern grandeur of these ramparts of nature; and the whole contributed to form such a picture as artists travel a thousand miles to contemplate. Lelia, however, had looked upon it from childhood. It had

never been forced upon her imagination by contrast, for she had never travelled five miles from her father's house, and she continued to knit, and sing, and dream, without even raising her eyes.

Her voice was rarely loud enough to be caught by the echoes of the opposite rocks; although sometimes it did happen that, carried away by enthusiasm, she produced a tone which was repeated by the fairy minstrels of the glea. On the present occasion she listened with surprise to a similar effect, for her voice had died almost in a whisper. She sang another stanza in a louder key. The challenge was accepted; and a rich, sweet voice took up the strain of her favourite ballad where she had dropped it.

Lelia's first impulse was to fly; her second, to sit still and watch for a renewal of the music; and her third, which she obeyed, to steal on tiptoe to the edge of the ravine, and look down into the abyse, from whence the voice seemed to proceed.

The echo, she discovered, was a young man, engaged in mavigating a raft down the river—such as is used by the peasantry of the Alps to float themselves and their wares to market, and which at this moment was stranded on the shore, at the foot of the garden. He beant upon an oar, as if in the act of peshing off his clumasy boat; but his face was upturned like one watching for the appearance of a star; and Lelin felt a sudden conviction, she knew not why, that he lead seen her through the trees while she sat singing, and had adopted this method of attracting her attention without alarming her.

If such had been his purpose, he seemed to have no ulterior view; for, after gazing for an instant, he withdraw his syes in confusion, and, pushing off the raft, dropped rapidly down the river, and was soon out of sight.

Lelia's tife was as calm as a sleeping lake, which a cloud will blacken, and the wing of an insett disturb. Even this little incident was matter for thought, and entered into the soft reveries of sixteen. She felt her checks tingle as she wondered how long the young man had gazed at her through the trees, and why he had floated away without speaking, when he had succeeded in attracting her attention. There was delicacy in his little contrivance, to save her the surprise, perhaps the terror, of sesing a stranger in such a situation; there was modesty in the confusion with which he turned away his head; and, what perhaps was as valuable as either even to the gentle Lelia, there was admiration, deep and devout, in those brilliant eyes that had quailed beneath hers. The youth was as beautiful as a dream; and his voice!—it was so clear, and yet so soft—so powerful, yet so melodious! It haunted her ear like a prediction.

It was a week before she again saw this Apollo of her girlish imagination. It seemed as if in the interval they had had time to get acquainted! They exchanged salutations -- the next time they spoke—and the next time they conversed. was nothing mysterious in their communications. He was probably a farmer's son of the upper valley, who had been attracted, like others, by the same of the heiress of old Niccoli. He, indeed, knew nothing of books, and he loved poetry more for the sake of music than its own: but what of that? -the writings of God were around and within them; and these, if they did not understand, they at least felt. He was bold and vigorous of mind; and this is beauty to the fair and the timid. He skimmed along the edge of the precipice, and sprung from rock to rock in the torrent, as fearless as the chamois. He was beautiful, and brave, and proud; and this glorious creature, with radiant eyes and glowing cheeks, laid himself down at her feet, to gaze upon her face, as noets worship the moon!

The world, before, so monotonous, so blank, so drear, was now a heaven to poor Lelia. One thing only perplexed her: they were sufficiently long—according to the calculations of sisteen—and sufficiently well acquainted; their sentiments had been avowed without disguise; their faith plighted heyond recall: and as yet her lover had never mentioned his name!

Lelia, reflecting on this circumstance, condemned, for the moment, her precipitation; but there was now no help for it, and she could only resolve to extort the secret—if secret it was—at the next meeting.

- "My name!" said the lover, in reply to her frank and sudden question; "you will know it soon enough."
- "But I will not be said nay. You must tell me now-or at all events to-morrow night."
 - " Why to-morrow night?"
- "Because a young, rich, and handsome suitor, on whom my father's heart is set, is then to propose, in proper form, for this poor hand; and, let the confession cost what it may, I will not overthrow the dearest plans of my only parent without giving a reason which will satisfy even him. Oh, you do not know him! Wealth weighs as nothing in the scale against his daughter's happiness. You may be poor for aught I know; but you are good, and honourable, and, therefore, in his eyes, no unfitting match for Lelia." It was almost dark; but Lelia thought she perceived a smile on her lover's face while she spoke, and a gay suspicion flashed through her mind, which made her heart beat and her cheeks tingle.

He did not answer for many minutes; a struggle of some kind seemed to agitate him; but at length, in a suppressed voice, he said—

- "To-morrow night, then."
- " Here?"
- "No, in your father's house; in the presence of—my rival."

The morrow night arrived; and, with a ceremonious formality practised on such occasions in the valley, the lover of whom Lelia had spoken was presented to his mistress, to ask permission to pay his addresses; or, in other words,—for there is but short shrift for an Anzascan maid—to demand her hand in marriage. This was indeed a match on which old Niccoli had set his heart; for the offer was by far the best that could have been found from the Val d'Ossola to Monte Rosa. The youth was rich, well-looking, and prudent even to coldness:—what more could a father desire?

Lelia had put off the minute of appearing in the porch. where the elders of both families had assembled, as long as possible. While mechanically arranging her dress, she continued to gaze out of the lattice, which commanded a view of the road and of the parties below, in expectation that increased Bitter were her reflections during that interval! She was almost tempted to believe that what had passed was nothing more than a dream—a figment of her imagination, disordered by poetry and solitude, and perhaps in some measure warped by disease. Had she been made the sport of an idle moment?—and was the smile she had observed on her lover's face only the herald of the laugh which perhaps at this moment testified his enjoyment of her perplexity and disappointment? His conduct presented itself in the double light of folly and ingratitude; and at length, in obedience to the repeated summons of her father, she descended to the porch with a trembling step and a fevered cheek.

The sight of the company that awaited her awed and depressed her. She shrunk from them with more than morbid timidity; while their stony eyes, fixed upon her in all the rigidity of form and transmitted custom, seemed to freeze her very heart. There was one there, however, whose ideas of "propriety," strict as they were, could never prevent his eyes from glistening, and his arms from extending, at the approach of Lelia. Her father, after holding her for a moment at arm's length, as with a doating look his eyes wandered over the bravery of her new white dress, drew her close to his bosom, and blessed her.

"My child," said he, smiling gaily through a gathering tear, "it is hard for an old man to think of parting with all he loves in the world: but the laws of nature must be respected. Young men will love, and young lasses will like, to the end of time; and new families will spring up out of their union. It is the way, girl—it is the fate of maids, and there's an end.

For sixteen years have I watched over you, even like a miser watching his gold; and now, treasure of my life, I give you away! All I ask, on your part, is obedience—sye, and cheerful obedience—after the manner of our ancestors, and according to the laws of God. After this is over, let the old man stand aside, or pass away, when it pleases heaven; he has left his child happy, and his child's children will bless his memory. He has drank of the cup of life—sweet and bitter—bitter and sweet—even to the bottom; but with honey, Lelia,—thanks to his blessed darling!—with honey in the dregs!"

Lelia fell on her father's neck, and sobbed aloud. So long and bitter was her sobbing, that the formality of the party was broken, and the circle narrowed anxiously around her. When at last she raised her head, it was seen that her cheeks were dry, and her face as white as the marble of Cordaglia.

A murmur of compassion ran through the bystanders; and the words "poor thing!—still so delicate!—old hysteries!" were whisperingly repeated from one to the other. The father was alarmed, and hastened to cut short a ceremony which seemed so appalling to the nervous timidity of his daughter.

"It is enough," said he; "all will be over in a moment. Lelia, do you accept of this young man for your suitor?—come, one little word, and it is done." Lelia tried in vain to speak, and she bowed her acquiescence. "Sirs," continued Niccoli, "my daughter accepts of the suitor you offer. It is enough; salute your mistress, my son, and let us go in, and pass round the cup of alliance."

"The maiden hath not answered," observed a cold, cautious voice among the relations of the suitor.

"Speak, then," said Niccoli, casting an angry and disdainful look at the formalist,—" it is but a word—a sound. Speak!" Lelia's dry, white lips had unclosed to obey, when the gate of the little court was wrenched open by one who was apparently too much in haste to find the latch, and a man rushed into the midst of the circle.

- "Speak not!" he shouted, "I forbid!" Lehe sprung towards him with a stiffed cry, and would have thrown herself into his arms, had she not been suddenly caught midway by her father.
- "What is this?" demanded he stornly, but in rising alarm; "rufflan—drunkard—madman!—what would you here?"
- "You cannot provoke me, Niccoli," said the intruder, "were you to spit upon me! I come to demand your daughter in marriage."
 - "You!" shouted the enraged father.
- "You!" repeated the relations, in tones of wonder, scorn, rage, or ridicule, according to the temperament of the individual.
- "There needeth no more of this," said the same cold, cautions voice that had spoken before; "a wedding begun in a brawl will never end in a bedding. To demand a girl in legitimate marriage is neither sin nor shame; let the young man be answered even by the maiden herself, and then depart in peace."
- "He hath spoken well," said the more cautious among the old men; "speak, daughter; answer, and let the man begone!" Lelia grew pale, and then red. She made a step forward—hesitated—looked at her father timidly—and then stood as still as a statue, pressing her clasped hands upon her bosom, as if to silence the throbbings that disturbed her reason.
- "Girl," said old Niccoli, in a voice of suppressed passion, as he seized her by the arm, "do you know that man?—did you ever see him before? Answer, can you tell me his name?"
 - " Nol"
- "No!—the insolent ruffian! Go, girl, present your cheek to your future husband, that the customs of our ancestors may be fulfilled, and leave me to clear my doorway of vagabonds!"

She stepped forward mechanically; but when the legitimate suitor, extending his arms, ran forward to meet her, she eluded him with a sudden shriek, and staggered towards the intruder.

"Hold—hold!" cried the relations, "you are mad—you know not what you do—it is Francesco, the mineralo!" She had reached the stranger, who did not move from where he stood; and, as the ill-omened name met her ear, she fainted in his arms.

The confusion that ensued was indescribable. Lelia was carried senseless into the house; and it required the efforts of half the party to hold back her father, who would have grappled with the mineralo upon the spot. Francesco stood for some time with folded arms, in mournful and moody silence; but when at length the voice of cursing, which Niccoli confinued to pour forth against him, had sunk in exhaustion, he advanced and confronted him.

"I can bear those names," said he, "from you. Some of them, you know well, are undeserved; and if others fit, it is more my misfortune than my fault. If to chastise insults, and render back scorn for scorn, is to be a ruffian, I am one; but no man can be called a vagabond who resides in the habitation and follows the trade of his ancestors. These things, however, are trifles—at best they are only words. Your real objection to me is, that I am Poon. It is a strong one. If I chose to take your daughter without a dowry, I would take her in spite of you all; but I will leave her-even to that thing without a soul—rather than subject so gentle and fragile a being to the privations and vicissitudes of a life like mine. demand, therefore, not simply your daughter, but a dowry, if only a small one; and you have the right to require that on my part I shall not be empty-handed. She is young, and there can be, and ought to be, no hurry with her marriage: but give me only a year—a single year; name a reasonable sum; and if by the appointed time I cannot tell the money into your

hands, I hereby engage to relinquish every claim, which her generous preference has given me, upon your daughter's hand."

"It is well put," replied the cold and cautious voice in the assembly. "A year, at any rate, would have elapsed between the present betrothing and the damsel's marriage. If the young man, before the bells of twelve, on this night twelvemonth, layeth down upon the table, either in coined money, or in gold, or golden ore, the same sum which we were here ready to guarantee on the part of my grandson, why I, for one, shall not object to the maiden's whim—provided it continues so long—being consulted, in the disposal of her hand, in preference to her father's judgment and desires. The sum is only three thousand livres!" A laugh of scorn and derision arose among the relations.

"Yes, yes," said they, "it is but just. Let the mineralo produce three thousand livres, and he shall have his bride. Neighbour Niccoli, it is a fair proposal; allow us to intercede for Francesco, and beg your assent!"

"Sirs," said Francesco, in perplexity mingled with anger, "the sum of three thousand livres—" He was interrupted by another forced laugh of derision.

"It is a fair proposal," repeated the relations; "agree, neighbour Niccoli, agree!"

" I agree," said Niccoli disdainfully.

"It is agreed!" replied Francesco, in a burst of haughty indignation; and with a swelling heart he withdrew.

A very remarkable change appeared to take place from that moment in the character and habits of the mineralo. He not only deserted the company of his riotous associates, but even that of the few respectable persons to whose houses he had obtained admission, either by his talents for singing, or the comparative propriety of his conduct. Day after day he laboured in his precarious avocation. The changes of the seasons were not now admitted as excuses. The storm did not drive him to the wine-shed, and the rain did not con-

fine him to his hut. Day after day, and often night after night, he was to be found in the field—on the mountains by the sides of the rain-courses—on the shores of the torrent.

• He rarely indulged himself even in the recreation of meeting his mistress, for whom all this labour was submitted to. Gold, not as a means but as an end, seemed to be his thought by day, and his dream by night, the object and end of his existence. When they did meet, in darkness, and loneliness, and mystery, it was but to exchange a few hurried sentences of hope and comfort, and affected reliance upon fortune. On these occasions tears, and tremblings, and hysterical sobbings, sometimes told, on her part, at once the hollowness of her words, and the weakness of her constitution; but on his all was, or seemed to be, enthusiasm and steadfast expectation.

Days and weeks, however, passed by—moons rolled away—the year was drawing to its wane, and a great part of the enormous sum was still in the womb of the mountains. Day by day, week by week, and month by month, the hopes of the mineralo became fainter. He could no longer bestow the comfort which did not cheer even his dreams. Gloomy and sad, he could only strain his mistress in his arms without uttering a word, when she ventured an inquiry respecting his progress, and then hurry away to resume, mechanically, his hopeless task.

It is a strange, sometimes an awful thing, to look into the mystery of the female mind. Lelia's health had received a shock from the circumstances we have recorded, which left her cheek pale, and her limbs weak, for many months; and to this physical infirmity was now added the effect of those dumb, but too eloquent, interviews with her lover. The lower he sunk in despondency, however, and the more desperate grew their affairs, the higher her spirits rose, as if to quell and control their fortune. Her hopes seemed to grew in proportion with his fears, and the strength which deserted

bim went over as an ally and supporter to her weakness. Even her bodily health received its direction from her mind. Her nerves seemed to recover their tone, her cheek its hue, and her eye its brilliancy.

The cold and singgish imagination of a man is unacquainted with half the resources of a woman in such circumstances. Disappointed in her dependance on fortune and casualty, Lelia betook herself to the altars and gods of her people! Saints and martyrs were by turns invoked; wows were offered up, and pilgrimages and religious watchings performed. Then came dreams and prodigies into play, and omens, and auguries. Sortes were wrested from the pages of Dante, and warnings and commands translated from the mystic of the sky—

"The stars, which are the poetry of heaven."

The year touched upon its close; and the sum which the gold-seeker had amassed, although great almost to a miracle, was still far—very far, from sufficient. The last day of the year arrived, ushered in by storm, and thunderings, and lightnings; and the evening fell cold and dark upon the despairing labours of Francesco. He was on the side of the mountain opposite Niccoli's house; and, as daylight died in the valley, he saw with inexpressible bitterness of soul, by the number of lights in the windows, that the fête was not forgotten. Some trifling success, however, induced him, like a drowning man grasping at a straw, to continue his search. He was on the spot indicated by a dream of his enthusiastic mistress; and she had conjured him not to abandon the attempt till the bell of the distant church should silence their hopes for ever.

His success continued. He was working with the pickaxe, and had discovered a very small perpendicular vein; and it was just possible that this, although altogether inadequate in itself, might be crossed at a greater depth, by a horizontal one, and thus form one of the gruppi, or nests, in which the ore is plentiful and easily extracted.

To work, however, was difficult, and to work long impossible. His strength was almost exhausted; the storm beat fiercely in his face; and the darkness increased every moment. His heart wholly failed him; his limbs trembled; a cold perspiration bedewed his brow; and, as the last rays of daylight departed from the mountain-side, he fell senseless upon the ground.

How long he remained in this state he did not know; but he was recalled to life by a sound resembling, as he imagined, a human cry. The storm howled more wildly than ever along the side of the mountain, and it was now pitch-dark; but on turning round his head he saw, at a little distance above where he lay, a small, steady light. Francesco's heart began to quake. The light advanced towards him, and he perceived that it was borne by a figure arrayed in white from head to foot.

"Lelia!" cried he in amazement, mingled with superstitious terror, as he recognised the features of his young fair mistress.

"Waste not time in words," said she; "much may yet be done, and I have the most perfect assurance that now at least I am not deceived. Up, and be of good heart! Work, for here is light. I will sit down in the shelter, bleak though it be, of the cliff, and aid you with my prayers, since I cannot with my hands." Francesco seized the axe, and stirred, half with shame, half with admiration, by the courage of the generous girl, resumed his labours with new vigour.

"Be of good heart," continued Lelia, "and all will yet be well. Bravely—bravely done!—be sure the saints have heard us!" Only once she uttered anything ressembling a complaint—"It is so cold!" said she, "make haste, dearest, for I cannot find my way home, if I would, without the light." By and by she repeated more frequently the injunction to "make haste." Francesco's heart bled while he thought of the sufferings of the sick and delicate girl on such a night, in such a place; and his blows fell desperately on the stubborn rock. He was now at a little distance from the spot where she sat, and was just about to beg her to bring the light nearer, when she spoke again:

"Make haste, make haste!" she said, "the time is almost come — I shall be wanted—I am wanted—I can stay no longer farewell!" Francesco looked up, but the light was already gone.

It was so strange, this sudden desertion! If determined to go, why did she go alone?—aware, as she must have been, that his remaining in the dark could be of no use. Could it be that her heart had changed, the moment her hopes had vanished? It was a bitter and ungenerous thought; nevertheless, it served to bridle the speed with which Francesco at first sprung forward to overtake his mistress. He had not gone far, however, when a sudden thrill arrested his progress. His heart ceased to beat, he grew faint, and would have fallen to the ground, but for the support of a rock against which he staggered. When he recovered, he retraced his steps as accurately as it was possible to do in utter darkness. He knew not whether he found the exact spot on which Lelia had sat, but he was sure of the surrounding localities; and, if she was still there, her white dress would no doubt gleam even through the thick night which surrounded her.

With a lightened heart—for, compared with the phantom of the mind which had presented itself, all things seemed endurable—he began again to descend the mountain. In a place so singularly wild, where the rocks were piled around in combinations at once fantastic and sublime, it was not wonderful that the light carried by his mistress should be wholly invisible to him, even had it been much nearer than was by this time probable. Far less was it surprising that the shouts which ever and anon he uttered should not reach her ear; for he was on the lee-side of the storm, which raved among the cliffs with a fury that might have drowned the thunder.

Even to the practised feet of Francesco, the route, without the smallest light to guide his steps, was dangerous in the extreme; and to the occupation thus afforded to his thoughts it was, perhaps, owing that he reached Niccoli's house in a state of mind to enable him to acquit himself in a manner not de-orgatory to the dignity of manhood.

"Nicooli," said he, on entering the room, "I have come to return you thanks for the trial you have allowed me. I have failed, and, in terms of the engagement between us, I relinquish my claims to your daughter's hand." He would then have retired as suddenly as he had entered; but old Niccoli caught hold of his arm:—

"Bid us farewell," said he, in a tremslous voice; "go not in anger. Forgive me for the harsh words I used when we last met. I have watched you, Francesco, from that day—and—" He wiped away a tear, as he looked upon the soiled and neglected apparel, and the haggard and ghastly face, of the young man. "No matter—my word is plighted—farewell.—Now call my daughter," added he, "and I pray God that the business of this night may end in no ill!"

Francesco lingered at the door. He would fain have seen but the skirt of Lelia's mantle before departing!

"She is not in her room!" cried a voice of alarm. Francesco's heart quaked. Presently the whole house was astir. The sound of feet running here and there was heard, and agitated voices calling out her name. The next moment the old man rushed out of the room, and, laying both his hands upon Francesco's shoulders, tecked wildly in his face:

"Know you sught of my daughter?" said he." Speak, I conjure, you, in the name of the Blessed Saviour! Tell me that you have married her, and I will forgive and bless you! Speak! —will you not speak? A single word! Where is my daughter? Where is my Lelia? —my life—my light—my hope—my whild —my child!" The mineralo started, as if from a dream, and looked round, apparently without comprehending what had passed. A strong shudder then shook his frame for an instant

"Lights?" said he, "torches!—every one of you! Follow me!" and he rushed out into the night. He was speedily overtaken by the whole of the company, amounting to more than twelve men, with lighted torches, that flared like meteors in the storm. As for the leader himself, he seemed scarcely able

to drag one limb after the other, and he staggered to and fro, like one who is drunken with wine.

They at length reached the place he sought; and, by the light of the torches, something white was seen at the base of the cliff. It was Lelia. She leant her back against the rock; one hand was pressed upon her heart, like a person who shrinks with cold; and in the other she held the lamp, the flame of which had expired in the socket.

Francesco threw himself on his knees at one side, and the old man at the other, while a light, as strong as day, was shed by the torches upon the spot. She was dead—dead—stone dead!

After a time, the childless old man went to seek out the object of his daughter's love; but Francesco was never seen from that fatal night. A wailing sound is sometimes heard to this day upon the hills, and the peasants say that it is the voice of the mineralo seeking his mistress among the rocks; and every dark and stormy night the lamp of Lelia is still seen upon the mountain, as she lights her phantom-lover in his search for gold.

TRANSFORMATION.

BY MRS. SHELLEY.

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale,
And then it set me free.
Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told
This heart within me burns.

COLERIDGE'S ANCIENT MARINER.

I have heard it said, that, when any strange, supernatural, and necromantic adventure has occurred to a human being, that being, however desirous he may be to conceal the same, feels at certain periods torn up as it were by an intellectual earthquake, and is forced to bare the inner depths of his spirit to another. I am a witness of the truth of this. I have dearly sworn to myself never to reveal to human ears the horrors to which I once, in excess of fiendly pride, delivered myself over. The holy man who heard my confession, and reconcilea me to the church, is dead. None knows that once—

Why should it not be thus? Why tell a tale of impious tempting of Providence, and soul-subduing humiliation? Why? answer me, ye who are wise in the secrets of human nature! I only know that so it is; and in spite of strong resolve—of a pride that too much masters me—of shame, and even of fear, so to render myself odious to my species—I must speak.

Genoa! my birth-place-proud city! looking upon the blue

waves of the Mediterranean sea-dost thou remember me in my boyhood, when thy cliffs and promontories, thy bright sky and gay vineyards, were my world? Happy time! when to the young heart the narrow-bounded universe, which leaves, by its very limitation, free scope to the imagination, enchains our physical energies, and, sole period in our lives, innocence and enjoyment are united. Yet, who can look back to child_ hood, and not remember its sorrows and its harrowing fe ars? I was born with the most imperious, haughty, tameless spirit with which ever mortal was gifted. I quailed before my father only; and he, generous and noble, but capricious and tyrannical, at once fostered and checked the wild impetuosity of my character, making obedience necessary, but inspiring no respect for the motives which guided his comm ands. To be a man, free, independent; or, in better words, insolent and domineering, was the hope and prayer of my rebel heart.

My father had one friend, a wealthy Genoese noble, who in a political tumult was suddenly sentenced to banishment. and his property confiscated. The Marchese Torella went into exile alone. Like my father, he was a widower: he had one child, the almost infant Juliet, who was left under my father's guardianship. I should certainly have been an un_ kind master to the lovely girl, but that I was forced by my position to become her protector. A variety of childish incidents all tended to one point,—to make Juliet see in 'me a rock of refuge; I in her, one, who must perish through the soft sensibility of her nature too rudely visited, but for my guardian care. We grew up together. The opening rose in May was not more sweet than this dear girl. An irradiation of beauty was spread over her face. Her form, her step, her voice-my heart weeps even now, to think of all of r elying, gentle, loving, and pure, that was enshrined in that celestial tenement. When I was eleven and Juliet eight years of age, a cousin of mine, much older than either—he seemed to us a man-took great notice of my playmate; he called her his bride, and asked her to marry him. She refused, and he insisted, drawing her unwillingly towards him. With the countenance and emotions of a maniac I threw myself on him —I strove to draw his sword—I clung to his neck with the ferocious resolve to strangle him: he was obliged to call for assistance to disengage himself from me. On that night I led Juliet to the chapel of our house: I made her touch the sacred relics—I harrowed her child's heart, and profaned her child's lips with an oath, that she would be mine, and mine only.

Well, those days passed away. Torella returned in a few years, and became wealthier and more prosperous than ever. When I was seventeen, my father died; he had been magnificent to prodigality; Torella rejoiced that my minority would afford an opportunity for repairing my fortunes. Juliet and I had been affianced beside my father's deathbed—Torella was to be a second parent to me.

I desired to see the world, and I was indulged. I went to Florence, to Rome, to Naples; thence I passed to Toulon, and at length reached what had long been the bourne of my wishes. Paris. There was wild work in Paris then. The poor king. Charles the Sixth, now sane, now mad, now a monarch, now an abject slave, was the very mockery of humanity. The queen, the dauphin, the Duke of Burgundy, alternately friends and foes-now meeting in prodigal feasts, now shedding blood in rivalry—were blind to the miserable state of their country, and the dangers that impended over it, and gave themselves wholly up to dissolute enjoyment or savage strife. My character still followed me. I was arrogant and self-willed; I loved display, and above all, I threw all control far from me. Who could control me in Paris? My young friends were eager to foster passions which furnished them with pleasures. I was deemed handsome—I was master of every knightly accomplishment. I was disconnected with any political party. I grew a favourite with all: my presumption and arrogance was pardoned in one so young: I became a spoiled child. Who could control me? not the letters and advice of Torella-only strong necessity visiting me in the abhorred shape of an empty purse.

But there were means to refill this void. Acre after acre, estate after estate, I sold. My dress, my jewels, my horses and their caparisons, were almost unrivalled in gorgeous Paris, while the lands of my inheritance passed into possession of others.

The Duke of Orleans was waylaid and murdered by the Duke of Burgundy. Fear and terror possessed all Paris. The dauphin and the queen shut themselves up; every pleasure was suspended. I grew weary of this state of things, and my heart yearned for my boyhood's haunts. I was nearly a beggar, yet still I would go there, claim my bride, and rebuild my fortunes. A few happy ventures as a merchant would make me rich again. Nevertheless, I would not return in humble guise. My last act was to dispose of my remaining estate near Albaro for half its worth, for ready money. Then I despatched all kinds of artificers, arras, furniture of regal splendour, to fit up the last relic of my inheritance, my palace in Genca. I lingered a little longer yet, ashamed at the part of the prodigal returned, which I feared I should play. I sent my horses. One matchless Spanish jennet I despatched to my promised bride; its caparisons flamed with jewels and cloth of gold. In every part I caused to be entwined the initials of Juliet and her Guido. My present found favour in hers and in her father's eyes.

Still to return a proclaimed spendthrift, the mark of impertinent wonder, perhaps of scorn, and to encounter singly the reproaches or taunts of my fellow-citizens, was no alluring prospect. As a shield between me and censure, I invited some few of the most reckless of my comrades to accompany me: thus I went armed against the world, hiding a rankling feeling, half fear and half penitence, by bravado and an insolvent display of satisfied vanity.

I arrived in Genoa. I trod the pavement of my ancestral palace. My proud step was no interpreter of my heart, for I deeply felt that, though surrounded by every luxury, I was a beggar. The first step I took in claiming Juliet must widely declare me such. I read contempt or pity in the looks of alt.

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I fancied, so apt is conscience to imagine what it deserves, that rich and poor, young and old, all regarded me with derision. Torella came not near me. No wonder that my second father should expect a son's deference from me in waiting first on him. But, galled and stung by a sense of my follies and demerit, I strove to throw the blame on others. We kept nightly orgies in Palazzo Carega. To sleepless, riotous nights, followed listless, supine mornings. At the Ave Maria we showed our dainty persons in the street, scoffing at the sober citizens, casting insolent glances on the shrinking women. Juliet was not among them—no, no; if she had been there, shame would have driven me away, if love had not brought me to her feet.

I grew tired of this. Suddenly I paid the Marchese a visit. He was at his villa, one among the many which deck the suburb of San Pietro d'Arena. It was the month of May-a month of May in that garden of the world-the blossoms of the fruit trees were fading among thick, green foliage; the vines were shooting forth; the ground strewed with the fallen olive blooms; the fire-fly was in the myrtle hedge; heaven and earth wore a mantle of surpassing beauty. Torella welcomed me kindly, though seriously; and even his shade of displeasure soon wore away. Some resemblance to my father -some look and tone of youthful ingenuousness, lurking still in spite of my misdeeds, softened the good old man's heart. He sent for his daughter—he presented me to her as her betrothed. The chamber became hallowed by a holy light as she entered. Hers was that cherub look, those large, soft eyes, full dimpled cheeks, and mouth of infantine sweetness, that expresses the rare union of happiness and love. Admiration first possessed me; she is mine! was the second proud emotion, and my lips curled with haughty triumph. I had not been the enfant gâté of the beauties of France not to have learnt the art of pleasing the soft heart of woman. If towards men I was overbearing, the deference I paid to them was the more in contrast. I commenced my courtship by the display. of a thousand gallantries to Juliet, who, vowed to me from infancy, had never admitted the devotion of others; and who, though accustomed to expressions of admiration, was uninitiated in the language of lovers.

For a few days all went well. Torella never alluded to my extravagance; he treated me as a favourite son. But the time came, as we discussed the preliminaries to my union with his daughter, when this fair face of things should be overcast-A contract had been drawn up in my father's lifetime. I had rendered this, in fact, void, by having squandered the whole of the wealth which was to have been shared by Juliet and myself. Torella, in consequence, chose to consider this bond as cancelled, and proposed another, in which, though the wealth he bestowed was immeasurably increased, there were so many restrictions as to the mode of spending it, that I, who saw independence only in free career being given to my own imperious will, taunted him as taking advantage of my situation, and refused utterly to subscribe to his conditions. old man mildly strove to recall me to reason. Roused pride became the tyrant of my thought: I listened with indignation -I repelled him with disdain.

"Juliet, thou art mine! Did we not interchange vows in our innocent childhood? are we not one in the sight of God? and shall thy cold-hearted, cold-blooded father divide us? Be generous, my love, be just; take not away a gift, last treasure of thy Guido—retract not thy vows—let us defy the world, and setting at nought the calculations of age, find in our mutual affection a refuge from every ill."

Fiend I must have been, with such sophistry to endeavour to poison that sanctuary of holy thought and tender love. Juliet shrank from me affrighted. Her father was the best and kindest of men, and she strove to show me how, in obeying him, every good would follow. He would receive my tardy submission with warm affection; and generous pardon would follow my repentance. Profitless words for a young and gentle daugther to use to a man accustomed to make his will, law;

and to feel in his own heart a despot so terrible and stern, that he could yield obedience to nought save his own imperious desires! My resentment grew with resistance; my wild companions were ready to add fuel to the flame. We laid a plan to carry off Juliet. At first it appeared to be crowned with success. Midway, on our return, we were overtaken by the agonized father and his attendants. A conflict ensued. Before the city guard came to decide the victory in favour of our antagonists, two of Torella's servitors were dangerously wounded.

This portion of my history weighs most heavily with me. Changed man as I am, I abhor myself in the recollection. May none who hear this tale ever have felt as I. A horse driven to fury by a rider armed with barbed spurs, was not more a slave than I, to the violent tyranny of my temper. A fiend possessed my soul, irritating it to madness. I felt the voice of conscience within me; but if I yielded to it for a brief interval, it was only to be a moment after torn, as by a whirlwind, away-borne along on the stream of desperate rage-the plaything of the storms engendered by pride. I was imprisoned, and, at the instance of Torella, set free. Again I returned to carry off both him and his child to France; which hapless country, then preyed on by freebooters and gangs of lawless soldiery, offered a grateful refuge to a criminal like me. Our plots were discovered. I was sentenced to banishment; and, as my debts were already enormous, my remaining property was put in the hands of commissioners for their Torella again offered his mediation, requiring only my promise not to renew my abortive attempts on himself and his daughter. I spurned his offers, and fancied that I triumphed when I was thrust out from Genoa, a solitary and pennyless exile. My companions were gone: they had been dismissed the city some weeks before, and were already. in France. I was alone—friendless; with nor sword at my side, nor ducat in my purse.

I wandered along the sea-shore, a whirlwind of passion

possessing and tearing my soul. It was as if a live coal had been set burning in my breast. At first I meditated on what I should do. I would join a band of freebooters. Revenge!—the word seemed balm to me:—I hugged it—caressed it—till, like a serpent, it stung me. Then again I would abjure and despise Genoa, that little corner of the world. I would return to Paris, where so many of my friends swarmed; where my services would be eagerly accepted; where I would carve out fortune with my sword, and might, through success, make my paltry birth-place, and the false Torella, rue the day when they drove me, a new Coriolanus, from her walls. I would return to Paris—thus, on foot—a beggar—and present myself in my poverty to those I had formerly entertained sumptuously? There was gall in the mere thought of it.

The reality of things began to dawn upon my mind, bringing despair in its train. For several months I had been a prisoner: the evils of my dungeon had whipped my soul to madness, but they had subdued my corporeal frame. I was weak and wan. Torella had used a thousand artifices to administer to my comfort; I had detected and scorned them all-and I reaped the harvest of my obduracy. What was to be done?—Should I crouch before my foe, and sue for forgiveness?-Die rather ten thousand deaths!-Never should they obtain that victory! Hate-I swore eternal hate! Hatefrom whom?—to whom?—From a wandering outcast—to. a mighty noble. I and my feelings were nothing to them: already had they forgotten one so unworthy. And Juliet!her angel-face and sylph-like form gleamed among the clouds of my despair with vain beauty; for I had lost her-the glory and flower of the world! Another will call her his!—that smile of paradise will bless another!

Even now my heart fails within me when I recur to this rout of grim-visaged ideas. Now subdued almost to tears, now raving in my agony, still I wandered along the rocky shore, which grew at each step wilder and more desolate. Hanging rocks and boar precipices overlooked the tideless

ocean; black caverns yawned; and for ever, among the seaworn recesses, murmured and dashed the unfruitful waters. Now my way was almost barred by an abrupt-promontory, now rendered nearly impracticable by fragments fallen from the cliff. Evening was at hand, when, seaward, arose, as if on the waving of a wizard's wand, a murky web of clouds, blotting the late azure sky, and darkening and disturbing the till now placid deep. The clouds had strange fantastic shapes; and they changed, and mingled, and seemed to be driven about by a mighty spell. The waves raised their white crests; the thunder first muttered, then roared from across the waste of waters, which took a deep purple dye, flecked with foam. The spot where I stood, looked, on one side, to the wide-spread ocean; on the other, it was barred by a rugged promontory. Round this cape suddenly came, driven by the wind, a vessel. In vain the mariners tried to force a path for her to the open sea—the gale drove her on the rocks. will perish!-all on board will perish!-Would I were among them! And to my young heart the idea of death came for the first time blended with that of joy. It was an awful sight to behold that vessel struggling with her fate. Hardly could I discern the sailors, but I heard them. It was soon all over! -A rock, just covered by the tossing waves, and so unperceived, lay in wait for its prey. A crash of thunder broke over my head at the moment that, with a frightful shock, the skiff dashed upon her unseen enemy. In a brief space of time she went to pieces. There I stood in safety; and there were my fellow-creatures, battling, how hopelessly, with annihilation. Methought I saw them struggling-too truly did I hear their shrieks, conquering the barking surges in their shrill agony. The dark breakers threw hither and thither the fragments of the wreck: soon it disappeared. I had been fascinated to gaze till the end: at last I sank on my knees-I covered my face with my hands: I again looked up; something was floating on the billows towards the shore. It neared and neared. Was that a human form?—It grew more distinct;

and at last a mighty wave, lifting the whole freight, lodged it upon a rock. A human being bestriding a sea-chest!—A human being!—Yet was it one? Surely never such had existed before—a misshapen dwarf, with squinting eyes, distorted features, and body deformed, till it became a horror to behold. My blood, lately warming towards a fellow-being so snatched from a watery tomb, froze in my heart. The dwarf got off his chest; he tossed his straight, straggling hair from his odious visage:

"By St. Beelzebub!" he exclaimed, "I have been well bested." He looked round and saw me. "Oh, by the fiend! here is another ally of the mighty one. To what saint did you offer prayers, friend—if not to mine? Yet I remember you not on board."

I shrank from the monster and his blasphemy. Again he questioned me, and I muttered some inaudible reply. He continued:—

"Your voice is drowned by this dissonant roar. What a noise the big ocean makes! Schoolboys bursting from their prison are not louder than these waves set free to play. They disturb me. I will no more of their ill-timed brawling.—Silence, hoary One!—Winds, avaunt! to your homes!—Clouds, fly to the antipodes, and leave our heaven clear!"

As he spoke, he stretched out his two long lank arms, that looked like spider's claws, and seemed to embrace with them the expanse before him. Was it a miracle? The clouds became broken, and fled; the azure sky first peeped out, and then was spread a calm field of blue above us; the stormy gale was exchanged to the softly breathing west; the sea grew calm; the waves dwindled to riplets.

"I like obedience even in these stupid elements," said the dwarf. "How much more in the tameless mind of man! It was a well got up storm, you must allow—and all of my own making."

It was tempting Providence to interchange talk with this

magician, But Power, in all its shapes, is venerable to man. Awe, curiosity, a clinging fascination, drew me towards him.

"Come, don't be frightened, friend," said the wretch: "I am good-humoured when pleased; and something does please me in your well-proportioned body and handsome face, though you look alittle woe-begone. You have suffered a land—I, a sea wreck. Perhaps I can allay the tempest of your fortunes as I did my own. Shall we be friends?"—And he held out his hand; I could not touch it. "Well, then, companions—that will do as well. And now, while I rest after the buffeting I underwent just now, tell me why, young and gallant as you seem, you wander thus alone and downcast on this wild sea-shore."

The voice of the wretch was screeching and horrid, and his contortions as he spoke were frightful to behold. Yet he did gain a kind of influence over me, which I could not master, and I told him my tale. When it was ended, he laughed long and loud: the rocks echoed back the sound: hell seemed yelling around me.

"Oh, thou cousin of Lucifer!" said he; "so thou too hast fallen through thy pride; and, though bright as the son of Morning, thou art ready to give up thy good looks, thy bride, and thy well-being, rather than submit thee to the tyransy of good. I honour thy choice, by my soul!—So thou hast fled, and yield the day; and mean to starve on these rocks, and to let the birds peck out thy dead eyes, while thy enemy and thy betrothed rejoice in thy ruin. Thy pride is strangely akin to humility, methinks."

As he spoke, a thousand fanged thoughts stung me to the heart.

- "What would you that I should do?" I cried.
- "I!—Oh, nothing, but lie down and say your prayers before you die. But, were I you, I know the deed that should be done."

I drew near him. His supernatural powers made him an

oracle in my eyes; yet a strange uncarthly thrill quivered through my frame as I said—" Speak l—teach me—what act do you advise?"

"Revenge thyself, man!—humble thy enemies!—set thy foot on the old man's neck, and possess thyself of his daughter!"

"To the east and west I turn," cried I, "and see no means! Had I gold, much could I achieve; but, poor and single, I am powerless."

The dwarf had been seated on his chest as he listened to my story. Now he got off; he touched a spring; it flew open! —What a mine of wealth—of blazing jewels, beaming gold, and pale silver—was displayed therein. A mad desire to possess this treasure was born within me.

- "Doubtless," I said, "one so powerful as you could do all things."
- "Nay," said the monster, humbly, "I am less omnipotent than I seem. Some things I possess which you may covet; but I would give them all for a small share, or even for a loan of what is yours."
- "My possessions are at your service," I replied, bitterly—
 "my poverty, my exile, my disgrace—I make a free gift of
 them all."
- "Good! I thank you. Add one other thing to your gift, and my treasure is yours,"
- "As nothing is my sole inheritance, what besides nothing would you have?"
 - "Your comely face and well-made limbs."

I shivered. Would this all-powerful monster murder me? I had no dagger. I forgot to pray—but I grew pale.

"I ask for a loan, not a gift," said the frightful thing: "lend me your body for three days—you shall have mine to cage your soul the while, and in payment, my chest. What say you to the bargain?—Three short days."

We are told that it is dangerous to hold unlawful talk; and well do I prove the same. Tamely written down, it may

seem incredible that I should lend any ear to this proposition; but, in spite of his unnatural ugliness, there was something fascinating in a being whose voice could govern earth, air, and I felt a keen desire to comply; for with that chest I could command the world. My only hesitation resulted from a fear that he would not be true to his bargain. Then, I thought, I shall soon die here on these lonely sands, and the limbs he covets will be mine no more:—it is worth the chance. And, besides, I knew that, by all the rules of art-magic, there were formula and oaths which none of its practisers dared break. I hesitated to reply; and he went on, now displaying his wealth, now speaking of the petty price he demanded, till it seemed madness to refuse. Thus it is: place our bark in the current of the stream, and down, over fall and cataract it is hurried; give up our conduct to the wild torrent of passion, and we are away, we know not whither.

He swore many an oath, and I adjured him by many a sacred name; till I saw this wonder of power, this ruler of the elements, shiver like an autumn leaf before my words; and as if the spirit spake unwillingly and per force within him, at last, he, with broken voice, revealed the spell whereby he might be obliged, did he wish to play me false, to render up the unlawful spoil. Our warm life-blood must mingle to make and to mar the charm.

Enough of this unholy theme. I was persuaded—the thing was done. The morrow dawned upon me as I lay upon the shingles, and I knew not my own shadow at it fell from me. I felt myself changed to a shape of horror, and cursed my easy faith and blind credulity. The chest was there—there the gold and precious stones for which I had sold the frame of flesh which nature had given me. The sight a little stilled my emotions: three days would soon be gone.

They did pass. The dwarf had supplied me with a plenteous store of food. At first I could hardly walk, so strange and out of joint were all my limbs; and my voice—it was that of the fiend. But I kept silent, and turned my face to the sun,

that I might not see my shadow, and counted the hours, and ruminated on my future conduct. To bring Torella to my feet-to possess my Juliet in spite of him-all this my wealth could easily achieve. During dark night I slept, and dreamt of the accomplishment of my desires. Two suns had setthe third dawned., I was agitated, fearful. Oh expectation, what a frightful thing art thou, when kindled more by fear than hope! How dost thou twist thyself round the heart, torturing its pulsations! How dost thou dart unknown pangs all through our feeble mechanism, now seeming to shiver us, like broken glass, to nothingness-now giving us a fresh strength, which can do nothing, and so torments us by a sensation, such as the strong man must feel who cannot break his fetters, though they bend in his grasp. Slowly paced the bright, bright orb up the eastern sky; long it lingered in the zenith, and still more slowly wandered down the west: it touched the horizon's verge-it was lost! Its glories were on the summits of the cliff-they grew dun and gray. The evening star shone bright. He will soon be here.

He came not!—By the living heavens, he came not!—and night dragged out its weary length, and, in its decaying age, "day began to grizzle its dark hair;" and the sun rose again on the most miserable wretch that ever upbraided its light. Three days thus I passed. The jewels and the gold—oh, how I abhorred them!

Well, well—I will not blacken these pages with demoniac ravings. All too terrible were the thoughts, the raging tumult of ideas that filled my soul. At the end of that time I slept; I had not before since the third sunset; and I dreamt that I was at Juliet's feet, and she smiled, and then she shrieked—for she saw my transformation—and again she smiled, for still her beautiful lover knelt before her. But it was not I—it was he, the fiend, arrayed in my limbs, speaking with my voice, winning her with my looks of love. I strove to warn her, but my tongue refused its office; I strove to tear him from her, but I was rooted to the ground—I awoke with the agony.

There were the solitary hoar precipices—there the plashing sea, the quiet strand, and the blue sky over all. What did it mean? was my dream but a mirror of the truth? was he wooing and winning my betrothed? I would on the instant back to Genoa—but I was banished. I laughed—the dwarf's yell burst from my lips—I banished! O, no! they had not exiled the foul limbs I wore; I might with these enter, without fear of incurring the threatened penalty of death, my own, my native city.

I began to walk towards Genoa. I was somewhat accustomed to my distorted limbs; none were ever so ill adapted for a straight-forward movement; it was with infinite difficulty that I proceeded. Then, too, I desired to avoid all the hamlets strewed here and there on the sea-beach, for I was unwilling to make a display of my hideousness. I was not quite sure that, if seen, the mere boys would not stone me to death as I passed, for a monster: some ungentle salutations I did receive from the few peasants or fishermen I chanced to meet. But it was dark night before I approached Genoa. The weather was so balmy and sweet that it struck me that the Marchese and his daughter would very probably have quitted the city for their country retreat. It was from Villa Torella that I had attempted to carry off Juliet; I had spent many an hour reconnoitring the spot, and knew each inch of ground in its vicinity. It was beautifully situated, embosomed in trees, on the margin of a stream. As I drew near, it became evident that my conjecture was right; nay, moreover, that the hours were being then devoted to feasting and merriment. For the house was lighted up; strains of soft and gay music were wafted towards me by the breeze. My heart sank within me. Such was the generous kindness of Torella's heart, that I felt sure that he would not have indulged in public manifestations of rejoicing just after my unfortunate banishment, but for a cause I dared not dwell upon.

The country people were all alive and flocking about; it became necessary that I should study to conceal myself; and

yet I longed to address some one, or to hear others discourse, or in any way to gain intelligence of what was really going At length, entering the walks that were in immediate vicinity to the mansion, I found one dark enough to veil my excessive frightfulness; and yet others as well as I were loitering in its shade. I soon gathered all I wanted to knowall that first made my very heart die with horror, and then boil with indignation. To-morrow Juliet was to be given to the penitent, reformed, beloved Guido-to-morrow my bride was to pledge her vows to a fiend from hell! And I did this!-my accursed pride-my demoniac violence and wicked self-idolatry had caused this act. For if I had acted as the wretch who had stolen my form had acted-if, with a mien at once yielding and dignified. I had presented myself to Torella, saying, I have done wrong, forgive me; I am unworthy of your angel child, but permit me to claim her hereafter, when my altered conduct shall manifest that I abjure my mices, and endeavour to become in some sort worthy of her. I go to serve against the infidels; and when my zeal for religion and my true penitence for the past shall appear to you to cancel my crimes, permit me again to call myself your son. he spoken; and the penitent was welcomed even as the prodigal son of scripture: the fatted calf was killed for him; and he, still pursuing the same path, displayed such open-hearted regret for his follies, so humble a concession of all his rights, and so ardent a resolve to reacquire them by a life of contrition and virtue, that he quickly conquered the kind, old man; and full pardon, and the gift of his lovely child, followed in swift succession.

O! had an angel from Paradise whispered to me to act, thus! But now, what would be the innocent Juliet's fate? Would God permit the foul union—or, some prodigy destroying it, link the dishonoured name of Carega with the worst of crimes? To-morrow at dawn they were to be married: there was but one way to prevent this—to meet mine enemy, and to enforce the ratification of our agreement. I

felt that this could only be done by a mortal struggle. I had no sword—if indeed my distorted arms could wield a soldier's weapon—but I had a dagger, and in that lay my every hope. There was no time for pondering or balancing nicely the question: I might die in the attempt; but besides the burning jealousy and despair of my own heart, honour, mere humanity, demanded that I should fall rather than not destroy the machinations of the fiend.

The guests departed—the lights began to disappear; it was evident that the inhabitants of the villa were seeking repose. I hid myself among the trees-the garden grew desert-the gates were closed—I wandered round and came under a window-ah! well did I know the same!-a soft twilight glimmered in the room—the curtains were half withdrawn. Its magnificence It was the temple of innocence and beauty. was tempered, as it were, by the slight disarrangements occasioned by its being dwelt in, and all the objects scattered around displayed the taste of her who hallowed it by her presence. I saw her enter with a quick light step-I saw her approach the window-she drew back the curtain yet further, and looked out into the night. Its breezy freshness played among her ringlets, and wafted them from the transparent marble of her brow. She clasped her hands, she raised her eyes to Heaven. I heard her voice. Guido! she softly murmured, mine own Guido! and then, as if overcome by the fulness of her own heart, she sank on her knees:-her praised eyes-her negligent but graceful attitude-the beaming thankfulness that lighted up her face-oh, these are tame words! Heart of mine, thou imagest ever, though thou canst not pourtray, the celestial beauty of that child of light and love.

I heard a step—a quick firm step along the shady avenue. Soon I saw a cavalier, richly dressed, young and, methought, graceful to look on, advance.—I hid myself yet closer.—They outh approached; he paused beneath the window. She arose, and again looking out she saw him, and said—I cannot, no, at this distant time I cannot record her terms of

soft silver tenderness; to me they were spaints, but they were replied to by him.

"I will not go," he cried: "here, where you have been, where your memory glides like some Heaven-visiting ghost, I will pass the long hours till we meet, never, my Juliet, again, day or night, to part. But do then, my love, retire; the cold morn and fitful breeze will make thy check pale, and fill with languer thy tove-lighted eyes. Ah, sweetest! could I press one kiss upon them, I could, methinks, repose."

And then he approached still nearer, and methought he was about to clamber into her chamber. I had hesitated, not to terrify her; now I was no longer master of myself. I rushed forward—I threw myself on him—I tore him away—I cried, "O loathsome and foul-shaped wretch!"

I need not repeat epithets, all tending, as it appeared, to rail at a person I at present feel some partiality for. A shrick rose from Juliet's lips. I neither heard nor saw—I felt only mine enemy, whose throat I grasped, and my dagger's hilt; he struggled, but could not escape: at length hoursely he breathed these words: "Do!—strike home! destroy this body—you will still live: may your life be long and merry!"

The descending dagger was arrested at the word, and he, feeling my hold relax, extricated himself and drew his sword, while the uproar in the house, and flying of torohes from one room to the other, showed that soon we should be separated—and I—oh! far better die: so that he did not survive, I cared not. In the midst of my frenzy there was much calculation:—fall I might, and so that he did not survive, I cared not for the death-blow I might deal against myself. While still, therefore, he thought I paused, and while I saw the villanous resolve to take advantage of my hesitation, in the sudden thrust he made at me, I threw myself on his sword, and at the same moment plunged my dagger, with a true desperate aim, in his side. We fell together, rolling over each other, and the tide of blood that flowed from the gaping

wound of each mingled on the grass. More I know not---- I fainted.

Again I returned to life: weak almost to death, I found myself stretched upon a bed.—Juliet was kneeling beside it. Strange! my first broken request was for a mirror. I was so wan and ghastly, that my poor girl hesitated, as she told me afterwards; but, by the mass! I thought myself a right proper youth when I saw the dear reflection of my own well-known features. I confess it is a weakness, but I avow it, I do entertain a considerable affection for the countenance and limbs I behold, whenever I look at a glass; and have more mirrors in my house, and consult them oftener than any beauty in Venice. Before you too much condemn me, permit me to say that no one better knows than I the value of his own body; no one, probably, except myself, ever having had it stolen from him.

Incoherently I at first talked of the dwarf and his crimes, and reproached Juliet for her too easy admission of his love. She thought me raving, as well she might, and yet it was some time before I could prevail on myself to admit that the Guido whose penitence had won her back for me was myself; and while I cursed bitterly the monstrous dwarf, and blest the well-directed blow that had deprived him of life, I suddenly checked myself when I heard her say-Amen! knowing that him whom she reviled was my very self. A little reflection taught me silence—a little practice enabled me to speak of that frightful night without any very excessive blunder. The wound I had given myself was no mockery of one-it was long before I recovered-and as the benevolent and generous Torella sat beside me, talking such wisdom as might win friends to repentance, and mine own dear Juliet hovered near me, administering to my wants, and cheering me by her smiles, the work of my bodily cure and mental reform went on together. I have never, indeed, wholly recovered my strength-my cheek is paler since-my person

a little bent. Juliet sometimes ventures to allude bitterly to the malice that caused this change, but I kiss her on the moment, and tell her all is for the best. I am a fonder and more faithful husband—and true is this—but for that wound, never had I called her mine.

I did not revisit the sea-shore, nor seek for the fiend's treasure; yet, while I ponder on the past, I often think, and my confessor was not backward in favouring the idea, that it might be a good rather than an evil spirit, sent by my guardian angel, to show me the folly and misery of pride. So well at least did I learn this lesson, roughly taught as I was, that I am known now by all my friends and fellow-citizens by the name of Guido il Cortese.

MISERRIMUS.

ON A GRAVESTONE IN WORCESTER CATHEDRAL IS THE EMPIIATIC INSCRIPTION, MISERRIMUS, WITH NEITHER NAME NOR DATE, COMMENT NOR TEXT.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

This little volume was originally printed for private circulation; but in consequence of circumstances of a simply individual nature, and therefore unworthy of record, it is now presented to the public in a new typographical form.

As, during the narrative, allusion is rarely made to the era, and to the character of the times, the reader is requested to bear in mind, that the principal events occurred in the reign of Charles the Second; when the internal government of the country was so lax, that in the remote and thinly peopled provinces, the wealthy and the powerful might have perpetrated, with little fear of legal retribution, the wildest act of social oppression and delinquency. So long as his more exalted subjects abstained from political indiscretions, neither the king nor his cabinet cared to examine too closely into their private enormities.

On a gravestone in Worcester Cathedral is this emphatic inscription, *Miserrimus*. No name, date, symbol, text, or comment is appended; nor any clue to the country, station,

[&]quot;La dutée de nos passions ne dépend pas plus de nous que la durée de notre vie."

[&]quot; Plus on aime une maîtresse, et plus on est près de la hair."

or career of the individual thus unhapply and terribly distinguished. Whether a clue has or has not been found, and whether the following pages are a genuine or fictitious autobiography, are questions which must be submitted to the solution of the reader; who will, no doubt, decide according to the confidence or suspicion with which Nature has endowed him.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It has been observed by a most respectable publication, that the hero of the following pages does not embody the idea which the inscription on the tombstone would naturally beget in the mind of a reflective person. The word "Miserrimus," it is asserted, engenders feelings of charity and sympathy, and invests with a tender and plaintive interest the individual to whom it has been applied; whereas, the principal personage of this volume has been endowed with so fiery and villanous a character, that he fairly merits the designation of Furiosissimus.

The word "Miserrimus," attached by himself, or by another, to a living and guiltless person, would certainly inwest him with a tender and plaintive interest; but, considered as an epitaph, it assumes a very different aspect; it no longer characterises existing misfortune, but the memory of the dead. The greater the sufferings of a good man in this mortal state, the greater his happiness in escaping from it; only so long as he endures the ills of humanity is he "Most Wretched:" his bequest for his tombstone would be Felicissimus. No sorrow can extend beyond the grave, but that which originates in a life of sin.

These are the reasons which have led the author to his interpretation of this impressive epithet, and to the portraiture

of his hero as a villain of the darkest die; but, not so consistently callous as to be incapable of experiencing the most heart-rending remorse.

The author never would have adopted this epitaph as the ground-work for a fiction, had he been aware that the name and career of the individual who selected it were known; but he received the first intimation of their publicity through the medium of the periodicals which reviewed his work. In them it was stated, that he was a conscientious priest, whose sufferings arose in his adherence to his religion. But, the exception does not constitute the rule: few virtuous men would be guilty of the eccentricity of stigmatizing their memories with the epithet of "Miserrimus."

The author's first knowledge of the existence of this epitaph originated in a conversation with Mr. Wordsworth; who afterwards wrote a sonnet upon it, which was published some five or six years ago in the "Keepsake." This avowal would have been made in the advertisement to the First Edition, but the author was then unwilling to appear in his own proper character.

An objection has been urged against the grammar of the title-page. It is averred that it is erroneous to declare that there is no "text" upon the tombstone; for "Miserrimus" is the text upon which a fiction of two hundred pages has been constructed. These censors forget that many of our English words possess various and discrepant significations; that the word bull, for instance, may denote "a blunder," a "papal letter," and the "male of black cattle;" and that "text" may mean a "scriptural quotation."

MISERRIMUS.

THE hand of the fiend was on me at my birth.

Even in extreme infancy I exhibited the utmost violence of character. I was frequently a prey to tempestuous bursts of passion, which intimidated the weak, and inspired the more reflecting with pain and disgust.

It were of little consequence to the interest of the fearful history which I purpose to relate, were I to reveal the names and fortunes of my parents. Even, however, if they had possessed the celebrity of rank, honour, and station, been ennobled rogues with all the delusion of ancestral splendour and iniquity attached to them, I would not have attempted to have palliated my vices beneath the hereditary claim to flagitious indulgence. But, as they were honest and obscure, I will not drag them into infamous notoriety by declaring that they were so unhappy as to give birth to that most wretched being, who, under a name too celebrated, contrived, during a long series of years, to direct the attention of Europe to his talents, his successes, and his delinquencies.

The thoughtless are too prone to undervalue the claims of boyhood to intelligence and energy. To the adult's superficial view of the feelings and perceptions of youth may be attributed the after errors of many a wayward spirit. Had I been so fortunate as to have possessed parents who could have studied the depths of my character, and have availed themselves of their knowledge, I might not now have to recur to a life of unparalleled crime.

I was naturally crafty, and often in my earliest years have I gloried in the consciousness of successful deceit. Often have I listened to some inconsiderate confession while I appeared engrossed by my puerile amusements; and often have I planned some intricate revenge while I have laughed with the individual I sought to injure. And, afterwards, in all the ecstasy of triumphant malevolence, I have said to myself, "They deem me inoffensive—a boy—a mere boy; but the poison of the upas tree is within, and I will carry its desolation into the homes of the happy; and their hearts I will lay waste as with fire and sword."— How little were those who superintended my education inclined to suppose that I could have entertained such thoughts as these!

Let these interested in the instruction of youth be assured that the passions of the boy are as strong as, if not stronger than, those of the man; though fortunately he has not the same power of gratifying them, or their effects would indeed be fearful.

Almost the earliest incident of which I have now a recollection was a visit I was permitted to make at the house of a school-fellow. We lay in different beds in the same room. He was a quiet, affectionate, kind boy, who by his good-humour and endearing vivacity had won the hearts of all who domesticated with him. In the morning he asked me how I had slept? I replied, in a voice that howled with rage, and with the spirit of the deman looking out at my eyes, "I have remained awake the whole night, and I have cried through every minute of it, in order that I may be able to show a sick face to your father, and declare that you have tormented and heaten me."

This anecdote may appear frivolous, but it is too emphatically indicative of my character to be omitted.

We returned to school; and my antipathy to this boy increased to a fearful degree, simply, I believe, because, in spite of all my wiles, he was more popular than I. Oh, if there be on earth a passion which carries a bell into the bosom of its possessor, it is the hate which is the offspring of envy!

My detestation for my school-fellow eventually attained

that height, and the insults and aggressions which I practised upon him were so ferocious, that, at last, even his mildness was turned into gall. He resented some provocation, I struck him, and we fought. Heart-broken as I now am, the rage and malice of that moment appear to me like a dream. I can scarcely imagine that this enervated, prostrated mind can ever have entertained passions so violent and so demoniac.

I fought with my spirit even more than with my body—my whole soul was in every blow; but still I did not succeed. At last, I fell senseless on the grass, and my enemy remained the conqueror of his oppressor.

From that moment, the darkest feelings which can disgrace poor human nature took possession of my breast. I lived only in the expectation of revenge; and an opportunity for attaining it offered itself too soon. I was tyrannising over an unfortunate boy, who was weeping and writhing beneath my inflictions, when a violent blow auddenly felled me to the earth. I rose, and discovered that I had endured this indignity at the hand of the being I most loathed. He reproached me for my dastardly conduct, and then walked placidly and triumphantly away. I meditated for a moment; then crept stealthily after him, drew my knife from its sheath, and plunged it up to its handle in his back. In his turn, he fell to the ground, and I stood over him, in thought, if not in deed, a murderer!

His wound, though a very severe one, having been pronounced not to endanger his life, his relatives and friends were content that my only punishment should be a dismissal from the school with every circumstance of ignominy. Accordingly, on one bright sunny day, when not a cloud interposed its friendly shade to obscure the expression of the emotion which malice, hatred, and shame begot on my distorted countenance, I was led to the principal entrance, and, amidst the executions and revilings of my assembled school-follows, and the reproofs and disgust of the officials, thrust through the old arch. Its iron gates closed with a clash

that vibrated to my very soul; the entire crowd of spectators raised one general acclamation of scorn and defiance, and I walked on my course, solitary, dishonoured, and debased.

This detail of puerile incidents may, I repeat, appear frivolous; but, as mine is rather a history of passions and emotions than of actions, I feel that I ought not to omit the recapitulation of any feature that might tend to convey a correct estimate of the general tenor of my anomalous mind.

Anomalous, indeed!—but in this possession I am not singular. Anomaly enters into the composition of us all; impar sibi is the biography of every created being, and I have proved no exception to the rule.

After my ignominious expulsion from school, I returned to my parents. My father was an extensive landholder in a northern county, who himself farmed the estate which he inherited from a long line of respectable ancestry, and lived in the narrow circle of rural society, unknowing and unknown to the great world. With him I led an idle life, and flourished in body, if not in mind, until I grew into vigorous youth. At the age of eighteen, my fond father seeing that I manifested no repugnance to his occupation, and none more ambitious offering itself, at his instigation I became a tiller of the land, and pursued my avocations at first with industry, and at last with interest. There is something in the tenor of this employment which is inimical to the strength of the evil passions; as the exposition to the air braces the body, the communion with nature softens the mind. The most innocent period of my life was the three first years which I devoted to agriculture.

For a long time, an estate that immediately adjoined the property which my father cultivated, had been untenanted., It was of considerable extent, and, in addition to many acres of fine arable and pasture land, comprised a good house and park, gardens, wood, water, and all the ornamental features which a wealthy family could desire. It was in A. D. 1670, and on the very day on which I entered into my twenty-second year, this domain found a purchaser and an occupant.

heard of the event with apathy, for little did I then imagine its consequences.

A short time afterwards, I first encountered her whom destiny had selected to be the instrument of my moral and physical, my worldly and eternal ruin. The morning was exquisitely beautiful; both earth and heaven smiled. It was the poet's month of May; and nature, animate and inanimate, held a universal jubilee. Listening to the carols of the birds, and watching the gambols of the deer, I was straying, in a happy state of animal enjoyment, along the banks of a lovely stream, when I heard the notes of a harp accompanying a female voice exquisitely melodious. To this hour the subject of that song haunts me; for, independently of the deep impression it then made, I had afterwards too fatal a reason for never forgetting it: it was the famous hymn to the Virgin, Maria santissima, madre amata. With all the fervour of religion, and the beautiful intonations of natural sensibility, conjoined to the skill of a practised musician, the invisible singer poured forth her beavenly strains. Rooted to the spot under the influence of this divine charm, I listened in an intensity of sympathy and rapture, until I felt the warm tears trickling down my cheek. Aroused by this proof to the consciousness of a weakness which I had never before experienced, and which I deemed degrading, I cautiously proceeded in the direction of the sounds, and at last discovered, though unseen by her, the being who had so moved me.

Oh, God! if ever the spirit of an angel abode on earth, it was incarnate in that girl! So hallowed, and yet so brilliant was her beauty, she seemed a personification of light! Her bright eyes—her bright hair—her pure skin—her perfect form—her upturned countenance, radiant with the devotion of her soul, and the scarcely brighter sun which shone in deceptive beams through the interstices of the foliage, above, around, and upon her, all combined to strengthen the illusion.

With a broken and a bleeding heart, and as an act of expiation, willingly would I compel myself to expatiate on the

whole detail of her charms, and summon before me, feature by feature, the image of the being who consecrated humanity; whose life was one continued career of innocence, honour, and happiness, until, like a demon, I swept across her path, and blasted the peace of her unsullied heart. Willingly would I impose upon myself any, and every, infliction; but this I cannot, dare not endure. In the most emphatic sense of the term, she was beautiful; and here I abandon the theme.

We met: and we met again. It is not essential to the development, or to the interest of my narrative, to relate how the deeper tone of our intercourse began, or proceeded. Words, indeed, could but feebly express its progress; for every faculty was engaged more than that of language, in promoting it. We had not exchanged more than the most meanless phrases of formal intercourse, when a mutual, though scarcely conscious, intelligence was established. And yet she spoke, and spoke most eloquently; but her eye was the organ of her eloquence.

Her father, our new neighbour, did not disdain to visit, on terms of perfect equality, our less pretending abode. He was a widower, and possessed this only daughter, and a son, an officer in the navy, who was then serving on a foreign station. He was descended from an ancient though not a noble family; he had been a Member of the Commons, and the political part he played during the Revolution, rendered him no favourite with the existing government. Though not remarkable for intellectual energy, he was a mild, worthy man, and a doting parent.

I had two sisters, artless, endearing girls, who rapidly conceived an enthusiastic friendship for her, which she as speedily returned. This intimacy induced a still closer union between us; and in the park, in the glen, on the lake, in the village church, in our respective homes, we repeatedly encountered. Transcendently fond of the charms of nature, we used to pass hour after hour, roving beneath the open sky, inhaling the pure air by the side of the brook, or on the

brow of the hill. Selecting the most beautiful spots for our resting-place, we would sit and while away many a happy morn and eve, in that delicious indolence which can only be felt by the healthful and the contented. Whilst my sisters supported a desultory conversation, in which she occasionally attempted to join, I gazed on her countenance with undisguised admiration, and lost myself in dreams of hapiness without alloy. With the beautiful and graceful modesty of youth and innocence, in sweet confusion she would strive to appear unconscious of my scrutiny; but, ever and again, with the exultation, the happiness which a lover alone can know, I marked her emotion rise beneath her transparent skin, and crimson her whole face with one exquisite blush.

How accurate is the observation of La Bruyère: —"Etre avec les gens qu'on aime, cela suffit; rêver, leur parler, ne leur parler point, penser à eux, penser à des choses plus indifférentes, mais auprès d'eux, tout est égal." To the truth of this passage, all who have really loved can willingly testify. But how few have really loved; how many millions are born without the power of entertaining this dangerous happiness.

In her presence, I rarely spoke; my feelings were too strong for utterance. Intense passion is ever tacitum and contemplative; yet how many women are won by vivacity, and fluency of speech. They are amused; and insensibly they attach a value to the society of the individual who amuses them. They marry, and discover, when too late, that they have found a companion, but not a lover: that they are united to a head, but not to a heart. How well is this sentiment expressed in this pretty quatrain:—

" Qui ne sent rien, parle à merveille;

Donnes d'un amant rempli d'esprit;

C'est ton casur, et non ton oreille,

Qui doit écouter ce qu'il dit."

Strange that I, who stand with my eyes opened on the grave, who have abjured the things of this world, should yet

derive a morbid gratification from the discussion of this worldly theme. Yes, even in this moment, the ruling passion of a life can make itself felt. Behold the nature of man; the littleness and inconsistency of his character adhere to him even in the hour of his death. It has been repeatedly observed, that an infinitely greater number of individuals terminate their lives by drowning in the summer, than in the winter; the dread of the cold shock of the immersion possessing more influence over the minds of the fastidious wretches than the dread of the dread hereafter.

At this period a striking change occurred in my character. The effect of passion is to brutalize; but the effect of love is to elevate. The man who really adores, dares not even secretly transgress; he feels as though he were ever beneath the eye of his mistress. Hitherto I had been the slave of many a wayward and sensual caprice; but under the consecrating influence of her purity, a new and better spirit grew within me. The coarseness of man's nature forsook me, and an unknown delicacy, a refinement, a fastidiousness of sentiment, arose in its place. I turned from my former thoughts and reflections with disgust; I loathed the vulgar levity which might once have amused me; and the voice of the libertine and the bacchanalian became abominations in my ears.

There are many who imagine that they love. Would they seek to learn whether their conjecture be well or ill founded,—let them ask themselves if they desire to insult the object of their attachment by either deed or word. Should they hear a small still voice answer in the affirmative, let them be assured that "the truth is not in them."

When we did not expatiate on our own feelings and anticipations, almost her only topic of discourse was her absent brother, of whom she was passionately fond. The affection which this ardent girl entertained for him, could scarce be conceived by a mind naturally less enthusiastic, or more subdued by worldly discipline. Romantic, gifted with a powerful imagination, and glowing with feeling, when she descanted on the qualities and excellencies of her brother, her speech rose into the highest order of eloquence. In those moments, with her flushed cheek and sparkling eye, and varying tone and animated gesture, she realized my youthful dream of the inspired Pythia of Delphi, revealing the oracle of her god; before, I need not add, the rude Thessalian had caused the young and the lovely to be superseded by the staid matron of fifty.

After my own heart was she formed; had I been endowed with the power of Prometheus, I could not have created a being that would have more perfectly embodied all my ideas of female excellence. All that she said, looked, and did, possessed a grace peculiarly her own. The wealthy and the gay are too often the apathetic and the unfeeling; engrossed in their narrow egotism, they are not even conscious that they possess not the power of sympathising in the welfare or the wo of others. But she was the child of sensibility, quick to joy, and quick to mourn; with a smile for the vivacious, and a tear for the sorrowing. Unlike the rigid, frigid woman of the world, never did I see her in a state of passiveness; always awake to the interest of the passing scene, her life was one endless variety of emotion.

Affectionately attached to her parent, her reliance on him was boundless; whatever he taught, she believed; the possibility of his erring could never even have entered into her imagination. I often dwelt with pleasure on this trait in her character, and thought that one who had been so fond a daughter could never prove a heartless wife; and there was, is, and ever will be truth in this mode of judgment. Learned, and skilled in all the attainments and arts adapted to a female mind and hand, she was wise without affectation, or even the consciousness of her knowledge. Ignorant of the pride of birth, fortune, or station, she possessed, in its fullest extent, the pride of integrity, sincerity, and delicacy. Ele-

gant, but not fastidious; lively, but not volatile; dignified, but not severe; refined, but not artificial; feminine, but not enervate; the daughter of field and plain, not of the sickly city, she could dance upon her native soil, with step us light, and limb as free, as Euphrosyne's, "when the merry bells ring round." Like Ariel, too, she could "climb the mountain," and could have "plunged the deep" as boldly, had the usages of her time and sex permitted her; for though timid as a fawn, and as graceful in her timidity, she pessessed none of the idle apprehensions which oppress the languid mind and body of the pallid slave of the crowded town.

And yet she was no angel; she was that better thing-a lovely woman. She had failings -failings which originating in her very virtues, served only to enhance the power of her fascinations. She had all the softness, pliancy, and impetuous tenderness of her sex; yet she sometimes exhibited a masculine vigour of mind. Variable as an April day; the creature of impulse and passion, warm, generous, and affectionate, in a pre-eminent degree, I occasionally thought, or fancied, that her zeal might be hurried into rashness, her confidence into credulity, and her energy into obstinacy. But then, I remembered that the surface of our earth produces flowers and fruit, though many a volcano may lie sleeping beneath it; and I loved not her virtues the less, because they might cover a disposition to error, which time itself might never develop. But it is one of the strongest evidences of the traces of the original sin, and of the consequent imperfection of our state, that, that very quickness and excisability of amiable and virtuous feeling, which bestow on a woman her greatest charm, constitute her principal hability to temptation and folly. Whether I judged her correctly, the sequel will show.

Her brother was her frequent correspondent; and one fine summer morning, she came to me in the wood, joyously displaying the letter which announced his immediate return. I thought that I had never seen her looking so radiantly beautiful.

In spite of the intimate communion which existed between us, I had not yet dared to declare to her the sentiments with which she inspired me. For though I may say that I entertained the conviction that she did not regard them unfavourably; for though, in short, in moments when reason exerted her sway, I even felt assured that she *loved* me; yet never did I resolve to speak boldly of my love, but a morbid sensitiveness intervened, and filled me with doubt, hesitation and suspicion. Thus, though her looks, her acts, her deep emotions, sufficiently proclaimed it to an uninterested observer, I never yet had obtained from her that decisive avowal of her passion, which could alone satisfy me.

Like all those who have ever loved intensely, I was the unconscious victim of the awe which she excited in me. It were impossible to express, scarcely possible to conceive, the fear, the apprehension, and the agitation I have endured in her presence. She had attained that mastery over me, that ever when I first appeared before her after a separation, however brief, my whole frame quivered, and every muscle and every nerve were spasmodic with emotion. I felt a difficulty even when alone in uttering her name; there appeared to me a profanation in breathing it to the silence and solitude of night—and at this moment I dare not record it; but, like Mary and her Calais, it will be found after my death engraven on my heart.

During the interview to which I am now recurring, I made repeated efforts to induce the conversation which I so intensely desired. I felt more and more deeply that she loved me, loved me devotedly; but when I sought to declare my own sentiments and demand the avowal of hers, my tongue cleaved to my mouth, and the unintelligible words died in disjointed syllables on my parched lips.

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She left me, and I remained on the spot in a transport of passion, invoking curses on my weakness, all the violence of my nature again breaking forth in the bitterness of this fancied degradation. I then swore with many a deep imprecation that no earthly power should prevent me from repairing to her that evening, and obtaining from her the final and irrevocable interchange of vows.

In this determination I commenced my return to my home. I emerged into the high road at the foot of a rather steep hill, which I was musingly and abstractedly ascending, when, at some little distance below me, a carriage stopped, and a gentleman alighted from it. Unconsciously I noticed this proceeding, but took no heed of the individual. Leisurely I continued my path, still absorbed in my irritation, when I became aware that footsteps were rapidly overtaking me. Turning round, I perceived almost at my side the stranger whom I had previously so imperfectly remarked. But how shall I express the emotions which assailed me, when, on a nearer scrutiny, I recognised in that stranger the foe of my youth, the object of my hatred, the cause of my crime!

He recollected me. All the demon began to stir within me. The aversion, rancour, and fury, which during so many years had been suppressed, not extirpated, awoke, in renewed vigour, dilated my frame, and flashed from my eyes. What were his first emotions on meeting me I know not; but, stimulated, perhaps, by my undisguised hostility, he quickly retorted with looks of scorn and defiance. We walked side by side for some moments, at each step slightly approaching nearer to the other. Neither spoke; but, wrapped in silence, and in our own dark thoughts, both appeared to be contemplating the act of violence, which neither knew how to commence. At length we came into personal collision.

He suddenly stopped; and, with a strong effort controlling his passion, in a stern voice, and with a stately gesture, exclaimed:— "Pass on!—We are not fit companions. The world is wide; and east and west, north and south, must be our relative course through life."

"What!" I cried, "you fear me!—Am I then a lion in your path?—I knew not that I was so terrible."

"A lion!" he repeated with a bitter sneer, and his dark eyes glowed with contempt; "a lion?—yes—a stuffed one—stuffed with your own self-esteem. Know, redoubtable man, that the most opposite causes will sometimes produce the same result. From the lion I might turn in fear; but you I deem as a reptile in my path, and I turn from you in disgust!"

"Stay," I cried, gasping with the violence of my passion, "and hear my defiance, villain that I loathe,—villain that I curse,—villain that I will annihilate!"

" Murderer!" he shouted in a voice of thunder.

I raised my arm,—he caught it in his grasp, and held it extended in the air with an amazing strength. Without motion, without effort, with our muscles rigid and distended with the animosity and malignity of our hearts, we stood for some moments, mutually regarding the face of the other with the expression and feeling of hyenas.

At length, withdrawing my arm, I exclaimed, " Not blows, but blood!"

- "Agreed," he replied; "ours is a feud which can only end with the life of one or both."
 - "When and were shall we meet?"
 - "In yonder wood, to-morrow, at sun-rise."
 - "And the weapons?"
- "Pistol and sword; we will not want for tools to dig ourselves a grave."
- "My hatred is such," I rejoined, "that I cannot extend to you the courtesies of social life, nor wear before you the mask of reserved politeness. I cannot say farewell to one whom I wish every ill. I leave you now, my living,

loathed, and loathing foe; when next we separate, I hope to leave you on the red grass!"

We parted; and I returned to arrange the business which this rencontre had carved out for me. I obtained the promise of a friend to attend me on the following morning; and I completed some testamentary documents, by which I bequeathed the whole of the little property I possessed to her. To her I then addressed every thought; and this train of reflection induced an enervation which made me tremble at the recollection of the risk I was about to incur. That danger, however, rendered me still more resolved to finally determine that evening the unreal doubts which had so long, and so unnecessarily, agitated me.

With the greatest impatience I awaited the arrival of the hour when we were accustomed to meet in the garden, if not by an acknowledged pre-arrangement, at least by a tacit convention. Never did time appear to travel more slowly; but at length the moment arrived, and I commenced my walk.

When I reached the spot, I found that she was already there. She heard my footsteps, and turning round, abruptly confronted me. I then saw that she was violently agitated; her face was flushed, and the traces of tears were in her eyes. I rushed forward to meet her. She receded. In overwhelming anxiety, with outstretched arms, I still advanced, but she still withdrew.

"In the name of heaven," I cried, "tell me, I beseech you, what has befallen you?" but she returned no reply.

I caught her in my arms.

"Dearest ———," I exclaimed, addressing her by her name, and folding her to my bosom, "speak, I implore, conjure you—what is the cause of this affliction?"

She slightly attempted to extricate herself from my embrace, but answered not.

"Torture me not, my loved, and may I not add, my

lowing one? I came here stimulated by the pangs and doubts of two long years to entreat you to assure me that you reciprocated in my affection, and this is the reception you yield me!—What has disturbed you?—Who has aggreeved you?—Name him, and by the heaven above, he shall not escape an awful retribution, if on earth there can be a man so base as voluntarily to cause the tears to flow from such eyes as these! Suffer me to hear your voice.—Oh, God, how terrible is this silence!—Speak to me, dear, adored one, in your own soft tones—tell me that your grief is unfounded; and, oh! tell me, tell me, that you will be nine!"

" Never!" she exclaimed with a mighty voice, and a fearful emphasis.

I stood as though in a dream; my arms no longer retained the power of embracing her; they fell by my side, and she availed herself of her release to withdraw a few paces from me.

At length I awoke from my prostration, and the power of utterance returned.

"Never!" I repeated; "oh, M---, retract this dreadful resolution!"

"Retract!" she cried, with wild energy; "what! wed a murderer—a murderer in mind, if not in deed—the murderer of my dear, dear brother!" and she sobbed convulsively.

God of heaven! what were then my feelings!

"Go!" she exclaimed, with an enthusiasm that seemed almost supernatural; "go! I hate you, I loathe you, I despise you! The dream is fled, the delusion is dissolved, and I see the heart of a tiger beneath the disguise of a man. Go, fiend! I denounce you! the stain of blood is on you—hence! with the curse of a fond sister, and a deceived woman, to wander like Cain over the face of the land, abhorred and abhorring!"

Bowed to the earth, I remained before her, during this torrent of inspired passion. Powerfully then did remorse

work within me; mighty was the expanse which it then comprised. The distant past recurred with a fearful distinctness; and the present, and the fancied future, lay open before me. I looked into myself, and I saw the evil of my heart; and I resolved to pluck it out. Had she then but listened to my fervent protestations of atonement and expiation; had she been softened by the agony of my self-reproaches, and the intensity of my self-debasement, and accepted the sincerest repentance that ever was offered by a contrite sinner, I might have lived to have been a wise and a good man, instead of the thing I am. Oh, why did not heaven in that moment inspire her with its own beautiful precept, "There is more joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance?" But the power of the fiend prevailed; she was inexorable; and I was lost.

"Treasure not," she exclaimed, "one hope, one little hope, in the corner of your corrupt heart. Between you and me fate has placed a gulf impassable. Your crimes have more than extirpated my affection; they have engrafted aversion in its place."

Still I implored.

"Begone!" she cried: "or stay, and hear me swear never again to entertain for you any feeling but that of unmitigated hatred and contempt!"

Hell entered into my heart, and fury flashed from my eyes.

"Woman!" I exclaimed, with all the ferocity of insanity, "urge me not too far, or by the heaven above, you shall live to learn that I can be a murderer!" and I ground my teeth, and beat the earth, in the paroxysm of my desperation.

She trembled beneath my violence; the colour fled from her cheeks, and the tears gushed from her eyes, as she turned on me a look of imploring anguish. I could not resist this pathetic appeal; and my passion immediately flowed in another channel. "Curses on my cruelty!" I cried; "but had I loved you less, I had been more forbearing. Now listen to me, while once more, and for the last time, I implore your mercy; reflect, then, before you reply. Punish me not for the crime of my youth; forgive me, and the rest of my days shall be passed in expiating it. Consider well my intreaty—my life, my salvation, are dependent on your decision. Answer not, deny me not rashly.—Oh, God! gift me with the powers of persuasion, inspire me with the words of conviction, and every future hour shall be devoted to thy honour and service.—Turn not away; let me gaze on your face, while on my knees I pray, for your own sake, for your brother's sake, reject not my contrition; but pardon, pardon!" and I lay on the earth before her.

Intense seemed the stillness around; and her low and sweetly musical tones sounded with an awful distinctness in my ears, as she deliberately, firmly, and solemnly replied,

"Never! never will I unite my fate to yours!"

"Devil" I cried, starting to my feet, "fly, and fly quickly! fly, ere I tear from your breast your false heart! Yet stay—stay, I command you, and hear me first retort your hatred: I hurl it in your teeth, proud, scornful, unfeeling, vindictive woman!—I defy thee, I hate thee, and I despise thee!—Now listen; mark me, and forget not, I have forewarned you: whatever portion of life may remain to me, I devote to evil—evil to thee and thine! I tear thee from my heart, and I sicken with disgust that such a silly, worthless toy should ever have possessed it!—Oh that I had words to make thee writhe as I desire, thou fickle, loathsome thing!"

With an effort of almost superhuman self-control, I watched her until she had disappeared; and then, rushing into the wood, I abandoned myself to the madness of my despair. I tossed my arms in the air, in unboly defiance of Heaven, and, in the strength of my wickedness, blasphemously invoked and dared the divine interposition; then,

casting myself on the earth, I dug its flinty, face with my distended fingers, till, jagged and mutilated, even in the extremity of my agony I became conscious of their wounds. Goaded into additional fury by this corporeal smart, I rose with a hoarse shriek of passion, and, in a paroxysm of desperation, like a maddened bull, hurled myself against the solid timber of a mighty oak. I felt the sharp and gnarled points enter my brain; a torrent of blood blinded my eyes; a fearful sensation subdued me, and I sank on the earth in utter insensibility.

When I recovered my senses, the darkness of night was around: I gazed on the sky, but neither moon nor stars were there; all was wrapped in a pitchy darkness. The heavy dews which had fallen on me, and the loss of blood which I had sustained, had induced a stiffness in my limbs which at first rendered me incapable of all motion. At length, after many efforts, and infinite bodily torture, I succeeded in rising, and again looked around me in much anxiety, for I knew not how far the night was advanced. Having, however, somewhat re-assured myself, by observing no trace of day, I slowly, commenced my painful return.

When I arrived at my home, I found, to my great relief, that midnight was scarcely passed. Several hours, therefore, must elapse before the rencontre of the following morning; hours most welcome, for never did exhausted nature more require repose than mine at that moment.

I slumbered uneasily until the first break of dawn, and then arose, but slightly refreshed. My wounds and bruises were still rigid and painful, and I felt heavy in mind and in body. But, when I regarded myself in my mirror by the fitful light of a flickering taper, never shall I forget the transport of rage with which I was seized. Though never a vain man, for my temperament was far too fiery to be ruled by the base passion of vanity, yet I attached that value to personal beauty which is the offspring of a desire to please those

whom we love. Not, therefore, without gratification have I been conscious that I possessed a manly form and harmonious features.

But how shall I describe the image which now met my view?—Hideousness is a word far too feeble to represent it. My head was swoln to a fearful size; my eyes were starting from their sockets; a large and frightful gash divided my forehead; and my face and hair were incrusted with coagulated blood. Yet it was not this distortion, but the consciousness of the cause of it, which so madly exasperated me. I, thought, not on the loss of personal comeliness; but it was the association, the vivid retrospect which that loss excited that made me call down curses on the head of the woman I had so recently adored.

Allexistence then seemed to me to be concentrated in one single word, revenge. Writhing under the intensity of this feeling, thirsting for another's blood to atone for the loss of my own, I repaired to the appointed spot. My friend had already arrived, and, after a few moments, my adversary and his second approached. In the misty and uncertain morning light, he did not observe the change in my appearance, until we were almost in contact. He started, and evidently did not recognise in the monster before him, the foe of his youth and of his manhood. He gazed around him as though he expected an explanation from the parties present, or the arrival of a third person; when I exclaimed,

"Turn, fool! and see before you the man who loves your company so well, he would cheerfully die the death of Samson, and immolate himself, rather than allow the Philistine of his wrath and his abomination to survive this hour of atonement!—Now do you know me?"

"I do," he cried; "less by your avowal,—for truth is a stanger to your heart and to your tongue—than by the malice. of your sentiments."

"Believe me," I retorted, "I seek that my actions should not disgrace my words. See—the mist is before the sun;

it is frail and transient: but, by the heaven that hears me, I swear, it shall be more enduring than one of us! Both, perhaps, may never again look on a cloudless sky.—And yet, I could almost rejoice to escape the doom I would bring on you; for I would rather endure the curse of existence, than share with you, even in that last best blessing—the grave!"

"Strange and unfathomable being," he impressively rejoined, "I gaze on you with wonder and with awe.—Are you above, or below, our mortal nature? for, surely so vast a wickedness cannot be of earth."

"I excite your wonder and your awe! What! can this external frame, this husk of the passions, so powerfully impress you? Oh that I could illumine my heart before you; then, indeed, you might quail!—Yes, look upon me well—you do not wrong me,—I have discarded the sympathies of my race:—and here I stand, a very reckless, a very desolate, and a very desperate man, possessed of no immortal, and of only one earthly hope,—that of spilling your blood."

"Consistent fiend!" he passionately exclaimed, "cannot you even here, on this spot, with the grave opening before you, entertain one human feeling?"

"Yes; I could be inspired with that of Mezentius, when he tied face to face the living and the dead; and could love to see you bound to your sister's corpse, only that then she would be beyond my farther vengeance!"

Will it be believed that, even in the very act of expressing this odious wish, I was conscious that I still loved her whose destruction was the object of it?—Yet such was my inmost feeling, for such is mortal consistency!

But, resolved as I am to endure the pang of representing my character minutely and faithfully, without the slightest concealment or mitigation of its iniquitous features, yet I need not farther pursue this offensive picture of ferocious hate; but confine myself to the detail of its results.

It was agreed that we should commence the combat with our pistols, and, if they failed, we were to determine it by our swords. The ground was measured, and, at the distance of eight paces, my antagonist and I stood face to face. Our seconds had arranged that the challenged party should fire first. We were asked if we were prepared, and having replied in the affirmative, the signal was given. I saw the flash, and trembled to and fro for a few seconds, then fell-backward on the earth: the ball of my foe had passed through my body.

Dreadful, excruciating were the sensations which I endured during the few succeeding minutes, while I lay on the grass—the *crimson* grass, which I had prophesied should be the bed of my enemy. In spite of the great effusion of blood, which, conjointed to what I had previously lost, induced a mortal weakness, I yet retained a vivid consciousness of all that passed around me.

My antagonist had thrown the discharged pistol on the earth, and stood with his arms folded across his breast, regarding with a stern and fixed countenance the wound from which my life-blood was fast issuing. Motionless and impenetrable as a statue, it was impossible to infer from his impassive countenance the nature of his feelings; but he appeared to be awaiting the result without anxiety, and without exultation.

My second advanced to assist me; but I snatched the handkerchief from his grasp, and applied it myself to the wound. An increased feebleness then subdued me, and I fell back on the grass, still keeping my eyes fixed on the countenance of my adversary, who retorted with an equally immoveable gaze.

I had thus lain during what appeared to me an eternity, but in reality, perhaps, did not exceed a couple of minutes, when his second approached him, and advised him to depart.

"No, no!" I shrieked in the agony of my dread lest my anticipated victim should escape me: "stay, stay, I com-

mand you!—I am prepared, and capable of firing;" and I presented my pistol.

But the second of my adversary interfered, and stated that so long as I remained prostrate on the ground, the laws of duelling required that I should be considered hors de combat; and that unless I arose, he could not consent that my foe should sustain my fire.

My friend then approached, in the intention of aiding me to rise; but the opposing second again intervened, and declared that unless I could stand, and fire without assistance, he should remove his principal from the ground.

I groaned with anguish; and nothing, I fear, prevented me from sending my bullet through the head of this zealous adviser, but the dread of thereby suffering my far more hated antagonist to escape. I instigated my second to protest against the injustice of this proceeding; but his remonstrances were vain; for, as we both too well knew the other was acting in accordance with the common rules and precedents on these occasions.

During this discussion, I was momentarily growing weaker. Hastily, therefore, in the fear of becoming utterly incapacitated, I struggled to rise, and partially succeeded, but immediately fell again. A second time, I made a still more violent effort, and contrived, with the assistance of the pistol, to raise myself on one knee. But the pain I then suffered was excruciating, and the great difficulty was yet to be surmount-How vividly intense, even at this moment, is my ed. recollection of the scene. My foe was still intently regarding me with the same impassive, inscrutable gaze. Not an emotion was apparent in the stony rigidity of his fixed and pale features. He neither quailed beneath my wrathful glances, nor retorted with a similar expression. His dark, deep-set eyes seemed to penetrate the inmost recesses of my soul, but offered no clue to the secrets of his own.

At length I succeeded in attaining my feet. For a moment

I reeled as though in a state of utter ebriety; then with one final, I may almost say, superhuman exertion of my remaining strength, I stood for a single moment as firm and motionless as a rock, deliberately levelled my pistol at his throat, and fired. With the fierce shriek of the death-agony he sprang convulsively into the air, and with a dull heavy sound fell on the earth a corpse. I saw the result—saw that my prophecy was fulfilled, that the green grass was red heneath him, uttered a faint cry of exultation, and sank into the arms of my second.

But another spectacle was yet reserved for me. I was aroused by a shrick so fierce, so terrible, that it might have awakened the dead on the judgment-day. Before me, prostrate on the ground, with the body of her brother intertwined in her embrace, her white garments and hair dabbled in blood, lay the unfortunate object of my love and my wrath. Suddenly she sprang to her feet with the rapidity of lightning. and raised her bare and crimsoned arm in threatening denunciation against me. I heard not her words; every faculty was benumbed; and motionless, speechless, fascinated as though under the influence of a basilisk, I gazed in awe unutterable on this sight of horror. With the red spot of frenzy on her forehead, her pallid cheek, contracted brow, dilated nostril, and quivering lip, she looked the personification of War, or the type of the Destroying Angel. The hair bristled on my head; my eyes became infected by the weakness of my brain; her form seemed to dilate until it stood above me like a tower, and I swooned beneath my terror and my agony.

For many after weeks I lay suspended between life and death. Often the natural strength of my constitution made an effort which would have restored me, but the moment I returned to my senses, the violence and impetuosity of my feelings induced an agitation which invariably renewed my disorder with redoubled force. She, whom in the perversion of my heart I then believed to be the unhappy source of all

my woes and all my crimes, was the incessant object of my thoughts and my inquiries. But I could gain no information with regard to her. Since the fatal day of her brother's death, she had never been seen to quit the house of her father; and none of the neighbourhood knew aught of the privacy of her life, save that she existed in solitude and in sorrow.

The family of my opponent having declined to take any legal steps to avenge his death, when I recovered, I was spared the necessity of concealment, or the pain and shame of a public trial. The first use I made of my restored strength and freedom was in personally endeavouring to acquire some account of her. By conciliation, by bribery, by stratagem, I strove to obtain from the servants whom I could encounter, the knowledge of any domestic incident, however trivial, which related to her. But all my attempts were vain. could learn, indeed, that she was clad in black; that she was frequently discovered in convulsive grief, and that she rarely left her chamber; but nothing of her conduct which could enable me to form the remotest surmise with regard to the sentiments she might now entertain for me. Neither in the agony of her sorrow, nor in the violence of her indignation, could any one declare that she had been heard to mention the name, or even to allude to the existence of her brother's murderer.

Hour after hour, and day after day, have I passed in wandering round her father's domain, in the vague hope of discerning her light form in the distance, or even of tracing a vestige of her step in the long grass, or on the gravelly soil. Evening has again arrived; yet still have I staid loitering with the same indefinite and deceptive feeling, gazing on the window of her chamber, until the light that rendered it visible was extinguished: then, I retired to curse the folly of my pursuit, and to rue that I was born. In storm and in calm, in heat and in cold, this was the occupation of my nights and days.

How wild and vain were then my fancies! How often,

while I wandered through the thick darkness with my strained eyes eternally fixed on that inaccessible light, have I thought on the tales of the eastern poets, and on the legends of our own land, and longed to have existed in the times when I might have bartered my soul with Eblis, or Beelzebub, for a flying car, or winged girdle, that would have enabled me to hover for but one moment around that illuminated window. My mind has even become so utterly enervated by despondency, that more than once I seriously recalled to my recollection the superstition of my school-days, when I believed that the recital of Christ's prayer, backwards, was a spell that would summon the Evil One from his den; and I felt almost inclined to practise the absurd impiety.

But what was the source of this exquisite interest? Was it love of her? or, was it love of revenge? Did I wish to woo her? or, did I wish to devote her to the fate of her brother? I was inflamed by neither of these motives separately, but by a combination of them all, and of all the inconsistent passions which ever agitated the human breast. I revered her many virtues, but I loathed her fickleness; for, in the perversity of my blindness, even to this base quality, which dwells but in feeble or in vitiated minds, did I attribute her abandonment of me. I desired to retain her love, but I still more desired to make her atone for the sorrow and the guilt which she had entailed upon me. I adored her as the source of former bliss, but I detested her as the origin of my present misery.

These were the opposing sensations which she excited in me; and under their torturing influence I knew not where to turn to hide me from myself. I writhed too under the shame of conscious weakness; for I felt that Fate had indeed separated us for ever. The sister could never be the wife of the brother's murderer.

After a prolonged endurance of these maddening conflicts, I at length gained sufficient strength to enable me to resolve to quit the country, and remain in foreign lands until I should recover a more healthful tone of mind. Having a relative

in Smyrna engaged in extensive trade, I determined to join him, embark in his speculations, and endeavour to obliterate, in the suspense and excitation of commercial pursuits, all recollection of my previous life.

But, before I departed, I sought to leave my sting behind me. I wrote the following letter, which I contrived should be delivered to her after I had sailed.

"Your curse is upon me; and like Cain, a fugitive and a vagabond, I am about to wander over the surface of the earth. The voice of thy brother's blood crieth up to me from the ground; and I, too, can reply, in the beautifully pathetic language of Scripture, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.'

"When first I knew you, whatever I might previously have been, I was walking in the path of rectitude; I sinned neither in deed nor in thought. If not inspired by any enthusiastic passion for virtue, yet my mind was in a state of quiescence which habit and reflection might have strengthened into a religious stability.

"You appeared, and my whole nature changed; my slumbering energies were awakened, and I laid them at your feet, for you to direct to good or evil. How you have fulfilled this trust, ask your own heart.

"Others have a thousand pursuits: ambition, pleasure, all the paths of wisdom, or frivolity, are open before them. In policy, in literature, in art, in all the various professions, men have a stake and an interest, and toil for gold, power, or renown. But I possessed none of these resources, virtuous or vicious. I had set my life upon a cast; I had but one thought, one object in existence; and, directly or indirectly, every action, every desire was associated with it. You were that object; and in you were comprised my life, and my world. Again, I demand you to ask yourself, how you have replied to this devotion?

"Now, hear my answer. On the showing of an aggrieved, and therefore a partial, witness, you learn the crime of my

youth. Your blood is inflamed by this exaggerated statement; and, without considering that the man may regret the errors of the boy, you indulge the impetuosity of your vindictiveness. This was not just; yet, so far, your conduct was comparatively venial. But my tale ends not here. Remorselessly, relentlessly, in spite of the most abject humiliation, though I stood before you in heart-broken penitence, and solemnly warned you of the consequences of your implacability—warned you, that on your decision depended the lives of two, and the salvation of one—yet, in cold blooded self-possession, when the delirium of passion was past, deliberately, callously you cast me off from you for ever. This was your deed; and verily it has met—ay, and shall continue to meet—its reward.

"What may be my future fate, I know not: but should sorrow and suffering so far undermine the little moral strength which remains to me, as to induce me to perpetrate the last, and weakest act of human folly, believe, and tremble at my prophecy,—Hereafter, my blood will be required at your hands.

"Ponder on what I have written—and live—live for ever—to lament that you were born."——

In framing this letter, I was the victim of contending emotions. The love which I still felt for her, perpetually instigated me to introduce expressions of tenderness and charity; but, my misanthropy prevailed. I looked on myself, and I said, Behold what she has made me! And is she, the cause of all, to be exempt from retribution? Am I to be the only victim? No! let her drink, and drink to the dregs, of the waters she has herself spontaneously imbittered!

And I smiled exultingly as I pictured to myself her cheek of health—her radiant eye—her elastic step—her soft and blooming cheek, converted into sickliness and emaciation—into sorrow and prostration: and I anticipated the bliss of saying, This is my work.

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During my voyage, I vainly endeavoured to withdraw my thoughts from the consideration of this all-painful theme. I struggled, and struggled intrepidly and consistently; but the curse of rejection was on me; and I writhed beneath its fatal infliction. Love, hatred, pride, shame, pity, and vengeance, were the conflicting passions which made my breast the arena for their strife, and retained both body and mind in an equal state of unmanly enervation.

We arrived at Smyrna; and I immediately plunged into all the intricacies of commercial speculation. My attention was most assiduous; and I devoted the whole of the day to the execution of the schemes which I often passed the night in projecting. This application was the result of my strong determination to struggle against my thoughts; but, I believe, had my mind been unoccupied, that I should naturally have derived a gratification from this pursuit; for in its excitation, its comprehensiveness, there was something peculiarly congenial to the general tone of my character.

The unreserved confidence of my uncle was speedily gained; and before I had passed six months in laboriously and consistently perfecting myself in the routine and detail of business, he entrusted me with the entire control of his extensive negociations.

Then I felt a sort of diplomatic spirit arise within me; a love of intrigue, calculation, and of the arrangement of all that mental machinery which directs and governs gigantic schemes in their remotest ramifications. Instigated by an ambition naturally as boundless as that of Goertz, a Ripperda, or an Alberoni, had Fate in earlier life afforded me an opportunity for its development, I endeavoured to make the success of the last speculation but a means of increasing the magnitude of the succeeding one. In every instance, without exception, Fortune favoured my exertions. Warraged throughout Europe, but never was a ship of ours captured; they usually sailed to and fro the crowded seas without meeting an enemy; but, if they did, they escaped; or, as occurred

more than once, the merchant ship repulsed the armed vessel. Hurricanes, fire, all the casualties attached to our profession, passed heedlessly, harmlessly over us; scarcely could we believe that such dangers existed. Perhaps neither Jacques Cœur nor Cosmo de' Medici ever conducted a more prosperous or extensive commerce.

Thus was I occupied during nearly two years; but then the stimulus failed. By the continued exertion of my energy, I had hitherte repressed that foe of my peace, the one great passion of my heart; but, alas, I too soon discovered that I had suspended, not weakened its power. Occasionally I unwittingly lost myself in recurrences to the past, in dreams of love, regret, and of anticipated vengeance; but I would rouse myself from the thrall, and rush into the tumult and abstraction of my worldly pursuits. Yet night-night, the fell tyrant, with its solitude, and its calm, its blackness, and its sleeplessness, I could not escape. When once the thought. of home, and of her, had seized on my prostrated mind, I wandered again through the green woods, on the hill, in the valley, and then-I lay in hopeless torture, the unresisting victim of my remorse, my love, and my hate, until the blessed light of dawn, and the voices and stir of men, arose to my succour, with their gaiety and their life.

And yet, as though my grief was not sufficient, I possessed an artificial mode of foetering it. During the commencement of our intimacy, one levely autumnal day, while walking in ther garden, I discerned her from the summit of an adjoining eminence, and in fear and trembling advanced to meet her. She received me continuely, though formally, and we were pursuing a desultory, and somewhat restrained discourse, when she plucked a flower from that beautiful plant the scationas. Professing to be ignorant of its perfume, I made a motion as though I would willingly have withdrawn it from her grasp, if I had dared. Confused and surprised, uncertain whether she ought to dissent or comply, in the indecision of her action, our hands met; I seized the flower, and in spite

of all my reverence and all my timidity, never returned it. That evening I reached my home, thrilling in every nerve and vein with pleasure and exultation.

This flower I had artificially dried, and had ever since guarded with such care that, after the lapse of three years, it was still in a state of perfect preservation. It accompanied me on my voyage; and during my sojourn in the East, many and many a bitter hour have I endured in contemplat-Divided by so vast a distance, and still more widely, by force of circumstance, it were vain to attempt to depict the sad, the painful, the dreadful thoughts engendered by this little memorial of hope, of home, and of happiness. None but an ardent lover can estimate the extent of its power in imparting a vividness to the past. It was a relic that addressed itself to the most powerful senses; one that I could see, that I could scent, that I could touch. It seemed to carry me through time and space into actual contact with her who had gathered it; and again, and again, without any effort of volition, was acted before me the scene I have described. In the delicious climate of the East, amid every inducement to repose and enjoyment, and surrounded by all the enchantment and luxury which that enchanted and luxurious land can alone supply; beneath the glittering dome of the gorgeous palace; in the fairy garden, by the side of the fountain, with its marble columns of exquisite whiteness in beautiful union with the noble foliage of the date, the palm, and the pomegranate tree; while the Persian sang, and the dark-eyed, graceful Georgian danced beneath the liquid light of the silver moon, have I sat gazing on that little flower until my sorrow rose in my throat, and I felt as though my heart-strings would have cracked. And yet such was my infatuation, that though this memorial of past happiness but served to augment my anguish, I never could acquire the fortitude to abandon, or destroy it.

To this extent, however, had I succeeded in controlling the dictates of my passion, neither directly, nor indirectly, in any of my letters, had I ventured to allude to her. Though no previous communication on the subject had occurred between us, my sisters, my principal correspondents, seemed to feel the force of this omission; for they never informed me of aught that in the remotest degree related to her, or to her family: and despite the temptations which I repeatedly endured, this silence remained inviolate.

I had passed two entire years in the East, when my uncle died, bequeathing to me the whole of his immense wealth and extensive trade. Then came upon me an indomitable desire of returning to England. Yielding to the impulse which I could not control, and mentally attempting to palliate. my weakness by the adoption of the Oriental creed, that man is born to fulfil his destiny, I prepared to return to the land of my birth. During the few ensuing months, I was as industriously engaged in contracting the dealings. of our house as I had previously been in enlarging them. At length, having converted the greater portion of my merchandize into gold, and so limited and arranged my commercial transactions as to enable a confidential agent to conduct them with safety, I departed from the East.

The hand of disease was still upon me; I had never recovered the blow which I had received. The pernicious effects of an enervating climate, the anxieties which I endured, and the exertions which I made in the sedulous prosecution of my arduous avocation, all tended to prolong the malady engendered by a wounded frame and a broken heart: and I stepped on my native shore, dejected and careworn, hopeless, fearless, reckless—a man without a smile, and without a tear.

Great were the changes which I found that my family had experienced. My only surviving parent had been dead several months; and I afterwards learned that the letter which bore me this afflicting intelligence had arrived in Smyrna on the very day I quitted it. My elder sister, married to a man of rank and affluence, had gone to reside in the metropo-

lis; and my younger sister, warned by me of my approaching return, alone remained to welcome meta the home of my fathers.

But great as were these changes, how much greater were those which the family of my unfortunate mistress had experienced. For many months after the death of his son, her father had led a life as secluded as that of his daughter. At last, instigated perhaps by the hope of excitement and distraction, he embarked a small partion of his fortune in mercantile adventure. He was eminently successful; and impelled by his success, he was induced to enter into some mining speculations of enormous magnitude. The consequence was, that, on my return to England, I found him utterly ruined. His estate, his last remaining property, was announced for public sale; and in the course of two short weeks, he and his daughter would be driven from it, friendless, houseless mendicants, to live, or starve, on the narrow gifts of contumelieus charity.

And how did I receive this information?—With utter, unalloyed exultation! But let it not be thought that I hoped to revenge my supposed wrongs by persecution; no, for I hoped to revenge them still more deeply by kindness. I sought to fortify, not to weaken her affection; I sought to punish her through the self-reproaches of her own heart, not through any external infliction: I sought to force her to believe that she had been the spontaneous source of our mutual unhappiness; and I only rejoiced in her ruin, because I anticipated that it would afford me an opportunity of overwhelming her with benefits, and of exciting in her a sense of painful and hopeless gratitude. Miserable as I was, my misery would have been increased even a hundred-fold, had I been assured that she had ceased to love me; for, in defiance of my crime and of my violence, I deduced from the intensity of her former affection, the enthusiasm and tenderness of her nature, and the solitude of her life - which, offering no theme for present contemplation, forces the mind to dwell on the memory of the past—that, despite of all her efforts to eradicate it, she

must still retain her passion for me. Thus, with a ruthless exultation, I had long been accustomed to dwell on the idea, that at some future, perhaps not distant period of my life, I should experience that greatest earthly happiness of seeing her at my feet, and of then contemning her proffered love as she had rejected mine. Little, however, did I purpose to persist in this contempt; I meant but to mete unto her as she had meted unto me, and then to take her to my bosom, and devote the rest of my days to eradicate the impression of the past—to force her to say that the last state of this man is not worse than the first. These were my dreams, and fearful was their realisation.

In prosecution of these intentions, I purchased, through a confidential agent, the entire estate of her father. At a very large pecuniary sacrifice, I paid all his debts, and placed him again in uncontrolled possession of his property; working so secretly, that no effort of his could ever have enabled him to trace the hand to which he was indebted. But I was aware that they knew of my return; and I left her to feel that I was their benefactor. None but those who have possessed passions such as mine, can imagine the wild and proud pleasure I derived from this first exercise of my power over her who had seen me at her feet and trampled on my contrition.

For several months after these occurrences, I patiently awaited some manifestation, direct or indirect, from her or her parent, of their consciousness that I was the author of them. I haunted as before, in gloom and despondency, the environs of the park; but I could not even obtain a glimpse of her form. After the fatal duel, all intercourse between our families had ceased; no hostility had been exhibited, but my sisters naturally felt that the sight of them could not but be painful to the bereaved father and daughter.

But, heedless of this honourable delicacy, and instigated by the agony of my impatience, I now prevailed upon my sister to visit their solitary abode. She was received with solemn courtesy; and at the end of a long half hour she returned to fill me with despair.

Often, with a reckless profaneness, had I said unto myself, Behold and see! there is no sorrow like unto my sorrow! but the tale of my sister proved the fallacy of my judgment: I had not yet known what Heaven destined me to bear. She described a painful change in the appearance of both father and daughter; she dwelt on the fixed gloom which had engraven itself on her features; on the tones of their voices, the sombre character of their demeanour, their heart-breaking dejection and prostration of spirit. She had availed herself of an opportunity of mentioning my name: the father started beneath the sound, but the daughter exhibited no emotion.

"With the beautiful resignation and sublime suffering of a saint," pursued my sister, "she seems only to exist in the anticipation of a future state, and to regard herself as eternally severed from the ties which bind frail mortality to the earth. She recalls to me the picture I saw, when in Paris with my sister, of that lovely but erring lady, La Valière, in her conventual garments, supplicating her Creator to sustain her in her hour of affliction. Though dissimilar in feature, precisely the same heavenly expression of humility, benevolence, and exquisite sorrow, beams in the large, humid, and yet pellucid eye of both. Believe me, my dear brother, that for worlds I would not willingly distress you; but you really must suffer me to say, that I cannot conceive a sight more touchingly pathetic, more painfully interesting, than this afflicted father and daughter."

The words of my sister smote me to my heart, and for a time I remained plunged in bitter retrospection: but, soon recovering myself, I multiplied question on question, to endeavour to extract some evidence of the nature of the feelings with which I might now inspire her. But I could derive no consolation from the answers; not a word, look, or tone had revealed the shadow of even a passing interest in my existence.

"Why torment yourself by these inquiries, my brother?" cried my sister: "I will not affect to be ignorant of their motive, and the love I bear you would induce me to deceive you, but that I believe it is better for your happiness that you should know the truth. Unreservedly, then, will I confess to you that I watched her narrowly for your sake; and you know the piercing power of a woman's eye, in detecting the secrets of the heart in her own sex, is proverbial—nous nous ressemblons toutes, et nous connaissons notre secret. I fear, then, I do not err, when I say, that I am convinced that the past can never be recalled. I think she has endeavoured to banish you from her mind; but, if you ever recur to it, I am sure that the image induces no pleasurable feelings. I speak thus sincerely and thus harshly to you, my dear brother, because I loathe to see you pining and fretting in the indulgence of a fallacious hope, wasting a life that might be useful to others, and happy and honourable to yourself. Believe me, teach yourself that you are separated for ever, and your natural strength of mind will emancipate you from the fetters of this unmanly despondency."

My sister judged truly. Hitherto I had only existed in the idea that she *must* still retain her affection for me in her inmost soul, however much the exhibition of it might be suppressed. But now, and now only, I began to suggest to myself the possibility, nay, the more than probability, of her having ceased to love me. Like the Sirocco, the thought swept across my heart, and left all desolate.

Nerved by desperation no longer to endure the agony of suspense, that same morning I addressed a letter to her, which I commanded, with the most threatening injunctions, my messenger to fail not himself to place in her hands. My order was obeyed; and, during the evening, my letter was returned to me unopened.

From that hour I became the prey of the combined tortures of hopeless love and hopeless hatred. I wandered about, a

miserable man; and I stood with my head bowed on my breast, and I cried, "From Dan even to Beersheba, all, all is barren."

My spirit raged against my kind; and I wished that all animate nature could be concentrated beneath my foot, that I might enjoy the ecstasy of crushing it into annihilation. And yet, such is the inconsistency of all human passions, that I, who could entertain these savage thoughts, who could ruthlessly raise my hand against the life of another, and as fearlessly stake my own on the flight of a bullet or the thrust of a sword, have yet stood trembling over the lake, the pistol, or the poison, contemplating the suicide which I sought, but dared not to commit!

How often, then, in my moments of calmer anguish, has the selfish and painful thought of the hours and days, the months and years which I had so fruitlessly consumed; of the love, devotion, and energy which I had so fruitlessly lavished, made me recall to myself, and feel in its fullest force and beauty, the exquisite pathos of that most touching speech which history records, "If I had served my God as I have served my king, he would not have forsaken me in these my gray hairs!"

But in the absorption of this painful recurrence to one of the severest trials of even my unhappy life, I must not omit to pay a tribute of affection to the memory of my fond sister. Oh, woman, woman! much calumniated being by the frivolous and the prosperous, in the hour of adversity we feel and admit the consciousness of your superiority. The lover assiduously attends the sick bed of his mistress; the son bewails and caresses his dying parent; and friend cleaves to friend with persevering regard: the surface is fair, but beneath is the lurking, secret, sometimes, perhaps, even half unconscious, hope of present or future personal benefit. Woman, woman alone, is capable of genuine unalloyed disinterestedness; and for her alone is reserved the high honour of proving that self-love is not the sole motor of existence.

Of this nature was my devoted sister: she adored virtue for virtue's sake; and really believed that the practice of it induced its own reward. She saw that I was miserable, far, far beyond the common apportionment of misery; and though, as I afterwards knew, she was at that very time sincerely attached to a neighbouring gentleman of high mind, birth, and character, who felt for her a more than equal affection, yet she cheerfully withdrew herself from the indulgence of this natural and fascinating feeling, to devote herself to my consolation; not as man may sometimes sacrifice to man in the rigid performance of a self-imposed duty, but in the beautiful unconsciousness of heavenly impulse.

While this beloved girl thus attempted, though in vain, to sooth the wretchedness of my state, the father of her who had indirectly caused it died; brought down to a premature grave by the misfortunes he had endured. In spite of her apparent hostility, all that related to her was still a subject of painful interest to me; and deeply did I lament the grief which I knew this fresh wound would occasion her.

A few weeks after this event, I had been sitting during several successive hours on the spot where we had first met; above me, was the intertwined foliage, and below me, was the rapid stream. Oh! bitterly painful was the chain of thought which this location suggested! And yet, with the infatuation of a morbid mind, pursuing the current of my miserable reflections. I continued to contrast the past with the present moment. Again and again I arrayed before myself all the minutest circumstances which related to that scene. I pictured her sunny smile, her beaming eye, her classic form in congenial union with her classic harp; and I dwelt on her sacred melody, until "Madre amatu," and each plaintive note, appeared again to tremble on my ear. These were the reminiscences which I tortured myself by placing in comparison with my actual state.

Wrapt in the corroding anguish of this retrospection, I grew scarcely conscious of time or place, when suddenly a

sound of singular interest aroused me into attention; it seemed the half-suppressed sob of female grief. I listened intently; it was a woman's voice bewailing; and now, borne on the breeze, came a louder and a deeper burst of sorrow. Excited instantaneously by a feeling which I could not define, into a temporary self-oblivion, I stole cautiously along until I obtained a sight of the sufferer.

God of heaven! for the first time for four long years I stood within a few yards of the being I adored! I knew—I felt that it was she, though I saw not her face. Clinging to the next branch for support, I gazed with a full and bursting soul on the picture she presented—and oh! how piteous, and yet how beautiful it was!

She was seated beneath the trunk of an old and fantastic tree, the huge limbs of which inclining downwards, its thick foliage threw a soft shadow around her. A simple garment of white, not ample enough to conceal the graceful outline of her Phidian form, displayed a neck of dazzling and exquisitely voluptuous whiteness. One statue-like arm, bare to the shoulder, uniting all the fulness and polish of the purest marble with the softness of nature, hung by her side, while the hand, as perfect in symmetry as in hue, rested lightly on the turf. The other pressed her forehead, which, bowed to her knees, was concealed by the dishevelled hair that fell in heavy masses to the earth, where it lay in accumulated clusters of silken brilliancy. She sighed and moaned most piteously; and heart-rending were the sobs which momentarily convulsed her frame, as she rocked to and fro, with an irregular and painful motion, in the strong agony of her grief.

This was the spectacle that met my gaze; and had it been the fabled Medusa, I could not have been more quickly transformed into stone. My blood ceased to flow, my pulse to beat; and I stood a breathless statue, in all but the too vivid consciousness of pity, horror, and remorse.

Suddenly, with fearful vehemence, she cast herself on her knees, and clasping her hands, raised her lovely arms to heaven in energetic prayer. I heard not her words; but the action and the expression denoted the homage of a broken and of a bleeding heart. She ceased; and her arms fell by her side, her head sank on her breast; the parted lips were motionless, and she seemed for a few moments in all the supineness of overwhelming despair: then, abruptly starting to her feet, she took one long lingering survey of earth and sky, and dashed herself into the stream. The agitated waters seized on her fragile form, and enveloped her in their gloomy depths; then tossing her to their surface, bore her rapidly along their raging course of foam and whirlpool.

What followed I know not, until I found myself standing on the brink of the stream, with her senseless body in my arms. In the madness of that moment, all reason was lost, and I had acted from intuitive and unconscious impulse.

I laid her on the grass, and essayed every remedy that art or affection could suggest to restore her to life, but in vain; till frantic with disappointment, in a paroxysm of grief, I threw myself by her side, and insanely kissed her lips, her eyes, and her forehead. The blood began to dance in my veins like burning alcohol, and the pent-up passions of years burst their unnatural confinement. I wound my arms around her unresisting form; I clasped her to my heart with the strong pressure of delirium, and yet I felt as though I only grasped a vision, a vacancy; substance itself was not enough substantial, reality not enough real, to glut the insatiate cravings of this fierce transport of blended love and grief. None, but those who may have possessed passions as ungovernable as mine, can picture the savage, the fearful delight which I derived from this clandestine embrace of what I then conceived to be the living and the dead!

There she lay before me; she, whom during four long years I had vainly endeavoured even to behold. There she lay; she, the pure, the rigid, the inflexible, without a tone or a gesture to check the wildest expression of my love. And yet, there was the form, and there was the eye, which had once

inspired me with the very intensity of that causeless fear which arises in the excess of passionate affection. "And now," I oried, raising her arm, and then allowing it to drop heavily on the earth, "the ruled has become the ruler, the slave is converted into the despot. I, the trembler, have now but to command, and lo, I am obeyed. I have but to say, Do this, and it doeth it;" and again I raised the arm, and waved it in the air, in awful mockery of the action of life.

But a flood of tears, and bitter agonizing dejection, soon succeeded to this ebullition of all the ferocious and inhuman passions of my nature. I pressed her hand to my face, I bowed my head to the earth, and I wept like a child.

While wrapt in the bitterness of my grief, I thought that I felt a convolvive movement in the hand enclosed in mine. I gazed intently on her face, and distinctly discerned a quivering in the lips. In a transport of hope, I raised her in my arms, and hore her to my home. Medical assistance was immediately summoned; and before two hours had elapsed she was restored to life. Swayed by the advice of my sister, and by my own dread of the effect which the sight of me might produce on her in her still precarious state, I retired to my room, before she was sufficiently recovered to recognize the objects around her.

In anxiety and agitation, I was revolving this extraordinary event, speculating on its cause, and endeavouring to surmise its results, when a servant entered, and presented me with a letter which had just been brought by a messenger from the hall. I started in astonishment, and a thrill of painful expectation ran through my veins, as I gazed on her well-known hand. I observed that it bore the date of the previous day; and then, in doubt and fear, in hope and eagerness, with a trembling hand, and an unsteady eye, proceeded to read that which follows.

"When this last confession of a fated sinner shall be revealed to you, the spirit of her who penned it shall be hever-

ing around you, shall be searching into your heart, shall be striving to commune with you: and if ever Heaven allowed the laws of mortal nature to be broken for any other than its own great purposes, doubt not that its presence shall be manifest to you. You shall feel it breathe on your soul, and blend with your being.

"Bashful, irresolute, apprehensive, the hereditary slave of prejudice and education, woman's career, from generation to generation, is one of continued self-deceit, mistrust, and restraint. But now, standing on the verge of the grave, the betrothed of death, with eyes that pierce into space, and meet on every tree the beckoning antics of the impatient fiend, the iron trammels of factitious habit fall from my mind, and I glory in declaring that —I adore you. I discard the timidity of my nature and the pride of my sex, and I avow exultingly, that I linger with delight, as I slowly retrace the three little, but oh, how comprehensive words, I adore you!

"And yet, none can ever know how I have struggled with my passion, how I have schooled myself to repress it. Often in an agony of remorse have I passed the sleepless night and day in imploring the protection of Heaven; but it came not. Eve after eve, morn after morn, when I offered up my homage to my Creator, I have sworn to forget you; but I only slept to dream of you, or awakened to summon before me, incident by incident, the blissful detail of our too fleeting intercourse. Nowhere could I turn for succour. With every action of my life, with every operation of nature, some thought of you was indelibly associated. The rising and the setting sun, the green hills, the gentle gale, the moon, the stars, the scent of flowers, all were so many foes to my peace, for all served in turn but to remind me of you. My books I dared not open, and music was even more fertile in heart-breaking recollection.

"Strife—constant, ceaseless, internal strife is the history of my life since we parted. And yet, so potent was the effect of my early self-discipline, that during the whole of this eter-

nity of suffering, nor word nor look has ever betrayed the weakness of my heart. God only knows what this effort has cost me, nor what I have endured, when I have marked you wandering beneath my window, in repressing my desire to offer you some token of my pardon and affection. Ah, relentless, vindictive, implacable, must you then have deemed me; and little did you think, while thus you dissipated health and happiness in the fruitless hope of gazing upon me, the callous, the obdurate, that I passed the equal hour in furtively watching your course, and sympathising in your anguish—that I gave you sigh for sigh, and groan for every groan.

- "Bitter, oh bitter were those moments of trial! How often, then, did I repeat to myself, that but for my own insensate rashness, my guilty violence, this desolation had never been. Our world was a garden of flowers, and I wantonly laid it waste. My poor, poor brother! I may not, could not if I would, criminate his noble, honest nature; but I cannot consent to die, and suffer you to think me more culpable than I am. The tale of your early life was repeated to me in a moment of excitation, and I have since too often felt that he may unconsciously have exaggerated the errors of your conduct. Well do I now remember that he described you with an animosity of which I did not deem him capable; but, alas! I knew not then of your encounter and contest on the morn of that very eve, or I might have received his statement with the modification of suspicion. Oh, that it had pleased Heaven to have enlightened me; I might not now have to lament a brother's loss, or to turn to the east and the west, the north and the south, but find no succour.
- "Think not that I would attempt to justify my conduct; I seek but to make you regard it in its proper light. No; heinous has been my crime, and fearful must be the atonement!
- "So long as my poor father remained, I, too, was doomed to support the infliction of existence. But now that he has left this hapless scene, unshackled, unfettered, free as air, I reign the queen of myself; more despotic than the despot, for

he but rules another's life, while I have attained dominion of my own. I love you—I adore you—and—we are separated for ever! A red stream flows between us—it haunts me by day, and it follows me by night. Beyond it I see happiness, elysium,—but I may not pass. On this side is despair; on the other, hope, love, gratitude, sympathy, all the blessings of this mortal state; but still I may not cross that small dark line of eternal disunion—for it is my brother's blood. This course alone, then, remains for my adoption—the sister dare not wed her brother's murderer, but she dares to die rather than live apart from him whom she more than idolizes.

" Now I have unlocked the inmost secrets of my heart; it is as naked before you as before my Creator. Oh, your curse is indeed upon me!—'I do live to lament that I was born!'-Harsh as was that wish, still harsher was the cause you had for framing it. I felt that I deserved it at your hands, and I wept bitter tears over my picture of the agony in which it must have originated. The rest of your letter but increased my sympathy and affection, for I saw in every line the excess of your despair, and I pardoned, nay, almost loved, that acerbity of expression which served but to prove your deep sense of your loss. To me you have ever been all that is good: and oh, how I thank you with my whole soul, with all the affection of a fond daughter, and with all the fervour of a grateful woman, for your last generous, noble act of kindness to my poor father! Cease not to remember, that in these sentiments I quitted the world, and let them be a source of consolation to you.

"And now, my beloved, fare you well! Let me entreat, conjure you to school yourself to think of me without regret. Soothing as is to me the expression of these feelings, I never had revealed them, had I not thought that at some future day, you would be less unhappy in the consciousness of them, than if I had quitted this mortal career, allowing you still to suppose me the vindictive, the unjust,

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the ingrate; the artful winner of your love, and the contemner of it!—Pray Heaven, that in adopting this course I may have judged correctly!

"Shed not one tear over my grave; forget me not, but think on me with serenity. Let my name be to thee an oasis in the desert of memory! And now, may the Almighty restore you to tranquillity, and ultimately to every blessing which this life can offer. Farewell again, then, beloved of my soul, and remember this last, this parting prayer—live, and be happy for my sake."

The moment I had completed the perusal of this powerful and extraordinary picture of love and devotion, of weakness and heroism, of rectitude and error, of religion and despair, I comprehended that it had never been intended to have met my eye while the writer existed; and instantly the whole machinery of her conduct arrayed itself before me. Unable longer to struggle against her passion, and the consequent disgust of life, she had resolved to die. In this determination she had written the declaration which I had just read, directing that it should not be delivered into my hands until after a stated period, when she contemplated she should no longer belong to this world of care. She had then left her home; and but for my intervention her plans would have been too accurately accomplished.

These were the thoughts that flashed across me; and then, with the exultation of a fiend, I strode up and down the chamber, the eventful letter in my hand. She was mine, then,—mine! bound to me by the ties of indivisible affection. A free career was open to me, and I might glut either my love or my hate. She adored me—had indelibly recorded her adoration—and I then grasped that proof of it which admitted of neither change nor appeal. Was she not beneath my roof, unprotected, friendless, utterly, irrevocably within my power? Might I not, then, avail myself of her weakness to effect her eternal disgrace, and thus at once

gratify the two dearest passions of my heart? Oh, no! no! worlds should not have tempted me to have adopted this course. I loved her too dearly to doom her to endless shame and misery; but my vindictive, morbid, unhappy nature, could not forgive her the anguish, the desolation, which she had caused me. At that moment, had her life been threatened, I could have cheerfully sacrificed mine to have ensured her safety; but to have preserved both, I could not have suppressed my feelings of resentment. The theory of the Orientals of two principles, the Good and the Evil, perpetually waging war in the breast of man, can alone represent the inconsistency of my sentiments.

In recurring, after this long lapse of years, to the deeds of this thrice guilty portion of my fated career, I sometimes cannot refrain from fancying that I never could have perpetrated them, unless at the time I had been the pre-ordained victim of confirmed insanity. Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementit, is a maxim which frequently in my own despite occurs to me. But, as this idea brings with it a shadow of consolation, I never allow myself to entertain it; for I am doomed by Heaven and my own will to endure for the remainder of my life the unmitigated horrors of remorse.

While, jaded in mind and body, the prey of intestine strife, I vainly contended with the evil of my heart, repeated messages from the sick chamber informed me of the state of the invalid. Several hours thus elapsed; the evening advanced, and darkness had fallen upon the earth, ere I was gladdened by the entrance of my sister. She told me that her precious charge had been slightly delirious, and had addressed a few incoherent words to those around her, but that she had just sunk into a calm and apparently intense sleep.

Hitherto, my sister had received no explanation of the appearance of her most unexpected guest; but she now sought a solution of the mystery, and I placed the letter in

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her hand. Her surprise was boundless. Her ingenuous countenance expressed the emotions which its perusal excited, and her deep blushes revealed the woman's sympathy in the feelings of her friend. Her feminine sensibility appeared to be even more struck by its passionate declarations than by its tone of anguish and despair.

When she had read it, she gazed on me with astonishment and inquiry; and I then communicated to her how I had rescued her friend from self-destruction, and that the letter had fallen into my possession because she had not had the power of countermanding its delivery. My sister listened with attention and evidently with satisfaction.

"The hand of Providence, brother," she said, "appears to be in this event: I begin to think that you may still be happy. What a noble, though an erring part, has my poor friend played. She could not live without you, but she would rather die than wed the man who was stained with her brother's blood. How heroic, and yet how weak! how disinterested, and yet how selfish! With my whole soul, I pity her; what a conflict must have been hers! But, now, it must exist no longer. With that written witness of the violence of her affection in your possession, she cannot again attempt to sever from you. Oh, brother, madly you ought to adore her! How much she is to be admired. Her very frailties are more noble than the virtues of others!"

Though I admitted the justice, or rather the inadequacy of this praise of my sister, yet it grated on my ears, for it was a tacit reproach to the sentiments I entertained. Shunning, therefore, further colloquy on the subject, I repaired to the sick chamber with a cautious step and a throbbing heart; I felt it beat against my chest as though it would have burst its confinement. My whole frame was agitated as with a convulsion; and my trembling limbs would scarcely support me. With emotions ineffable, noiselessly and tenderly I bent over her, and gazed on her dear countenance. Imperfect as was the light, it was sufficient to render every

object visible. She lay before me; her head turned toward the pillow, displayed but a portion of her lovely face, pale and marble-like, under the influence of exhaustion. Her bright, dark auburne hair, still unconfined, was scattered around her; and still exposed was her pure symmetrical arm, that pre-eminently fascinating, but most rare of female charms. So motionless, so profound her repose, it might have been deemed the sleep of death, but that the beauty of life was on her features.

Softly approaching my face still nearer to hers, I allowed the warm breath to play on my cheek, until I grew faint beneath the excess of my emotion. Withdrawing a few paces to recover my self-possession, unwittingly I again began to reflect on the change which a few short hours had effected in my fortune. When I last beheld her, I deemed myself the fated victim of her barbarity; and now, I stood over her the arbiter of her fate. I could not repress a smile of triumph.

This conflict of passion pursued me during the night. Sometimes I regarded her with all the tenderness of the purest affection; but then again the evil of my heart arose, and steeled me against the united influence of her faith, her love, and her beauty. I only thought of the sufferings I had endured; and that she-she, with all her apparent dove-like softness, had been to me as a moral Nemesis, a graven image of Vengeance with heart of iron and claws of brass, a pestilence that goes about seeking whom it may devour. Then, again, feelings of affection and contrition revived; and in the bitter consciousness of abject weakness, I threw myself upon my knees, and vehemently implored my God to inspire me with the strength to forego the vindictiveness I cherished. But Heaven heeded not the prayers that arose in the despairing ebullitions of an ill-regulated mind, not in the meek and lowly spirit of a holy self-abasement; and I returned to my moody fitful contemplations. Like Regulus, in his murderous cask, I felt myself rolling darkly onward to conscious and certain destruction, but possessed neither the power of arresting my course, nor of avoiding the tortures which it inflicted.

Plus on aime une maîtresse, et plus on est près de la haïr. What a strange and startling creed! and yet, when we examine it, we find it is founded in judgment and truth, and reveals a wondrous knowledge of the human heart. The moderate affection of equable minds, originating in reflection and esteem, is often an enduring one, or tranquilly terminates in natural decay; but that very impetuosity of character and feeling, which is the source of all passionate love, is also a mine of combustible, which any spark may explode into a conflagration of evil. Pitiable is the man who hates her he once adored; but my far more hopeless fate was that perfection, or rather that monster, in misfortune—to love and to loathe, in the same moment, the same object!

How vast the torments of the mind
That struggles to be strong!
How vast its efforts! yet we find
We still pursue the wrong!
In vain our soul its danger knows,
In vain its fate experience shows,
A strength our weakness can't oppose
Still urges us along!
Until th' exhausted reason seems
O'erta'en by thick and filmy dreams
That darkly press the madden'd brain,
Till wrought into th' excess of pain,
It wakens into sense again!

I knew, I admitted to myself, that I had been born in sin; that, during many years, I was innately bad. But, I remembered also that better seed had been sown, and that better thoughts were springing up within me, even before I first met with her. The intercourse which then ensued still farther diminished the influence of the evil spirit upon me; and I felt that on the morn of the accursed interview she

had held the scales of my fate; and that a future life of rectitude, or crime, depended on the decision of that moment. This was the bitter, ceaseless reflection which cherished, in defiance of every effort of my better nature, my morbid desire of vengeance.

The night passed, and the day began to gleam through the interstices in the casements. Several times she exhibited symptoms of awakening, and I retired to a part of the chamber, whence I could watch her return to consciousness without being subject to her observation.

She unclosed her lovely eyes and gazed intently around her, but apparently without alarm. She raised herself slowly, and examined every object with increasing attention and surprise. My sister, who had hitherto been partially concealed, now advanced. The light was still deceptive, and for a few moments she regarded her with a wildly scrutinizing, but doubtful gaze; then, suddenly uttering a faint cry of recognition, fell back on the pillow.

"Dear girl," cried my sister, clasping her in her arms and passionately embracing her, "welcome, thrice welcome, to life, to friends, to happiness!"

She closed her eyes, and covered her face with her hands, as though she were incapable of supporting the wide field of speculation which these words suggested.

"God of heaven!" she ejaculated in the low gasping tone of excessive apprehension; and, after a pause, added slowly and deliberately, with the manner of one nerved by desperation to ascertain the real extent of the anticipated danger, "I know that voice—it belongs to one fair and kind, and wise and good—it recalls days of happiness long past. By these, I adjure you to answer my question. How I have been brought here, I ask not, I seek not to be informed. I recollect too much of a fearful scene to wish that you should now recur to it; but tell me, oh tell me, I implore you, friend of my girlhood, my choice, and of my heart, who is the owner of this abode?"

- " A kind and good relative, who--"
- " And that relative is-"
- " Your friend."
- " And—is your brother?"
- " My brother," replied my sister, hesitatingly.
- "Then I am lost!" she exclaimed with ineffable pathos; but with neither apparent surprise, nor terror.

With a gentle violence, my sister removed her hands from her face, and fondly and soothingly kissed the pale cheeks down which the bright tears followed each other in quick succession. All the fountains of her heart unlocked by this warm sympathy, she drew my sister still closer to her, buried her head in her bosom, and sobbed convulsively. Returning her embrace with redoubled emotion, my affectionate sister mingled her tears with her unhappy friend's. How beautiful are the manifestations of female friendship in the utter self-abandonment of reciprocated sorrow! Never was a more elevating, a more heavenly sight than that then presented by those two lovely girls. And yet, even in that moment, her rejection, her disdainful rejection—a pestilence on the infernal word!—recurred to my wounded pride, and filled my soul with fury.

How calculating is the mind even in its fiercest passions. Strong as were mine, I should not, perhaps, have wanted the power to repress them, had I not been conscious that she had delivered herself over to me eternally, irrevocably, and that I might therefore indulge them with impunity.

"Dear friend," exclaimed my sister, "believe me, he adores you. Forget, then, your griefs, exert your energy, and resolve never to recur to the past. Maintain this resolution for but a few short months, and your happiness is your own for ever. Rise every morn to enjoy the day, and to anticipate the morrow; but, follow the advice which the wife of Lot neglected, and dare not look behind. Come, smile on me, my love, declare to me that you will comply with my intreaties, and obliterate, in a long future of contentment, all

recollection of the sorrows that are gone. See my brother, express to him these feelings, and add," continued my sister, smiling through the vestiges of her tears, "that you love him almost as much as he loves you."

"Yes," she replied, in a tone half sorrowful, half resigned, "the time for self-restraint is past: I can no longer deceive either him or myself, even if I would. I will see him, and avow to him the love I bear him."

I advanced and stood before her.

All the blood in her slight form rushed to her pale face, making every feature incarnadined one red; but quickly revelled, and left the countenance of the hue of death.

My sister gazed affectionately on us both, and then left the room. Would to heaven that she had remained! for though love and terror were not strong enough to fetter the demon within me, a feeling of shame might have been more powerful.

With a violent exertion, resisting the impulse which prompted me to throw myself into her arms, I stood moodily gazing on her. In spite of her own emotion, she had sufficient self-possession to discover that I was under the influence of an agitation which the circumstances of our meeting might not have been supposed to engender. A pause ensued; at last, she exclaimed, half affirmatively, half interrogatively,

- "You have received a letter?"
- "I have."
- "You have read it?"
- "Yes—a thousand times."

Again she blushed, though not so deeply as before.

- "Then I am unmasked!"
- "You are indeed; I know every secret nook of your inmost mind and heart."

Surprised more by the tone than by the sentiment of this reply, she looked intently on my face; but she could read there no avowal of the nature of my feelings.

"Why do you gaze so strangely on me, my beloved?" she

affectionately exclaimed. "You know—I have confessed—why should I not speak it—my eternal attachment. My fate is decided—abandoned for ever are all futile attempts at disguise, and—I live only for you. What then do you apprehend?" and she added, with female sensitiveness, "What means this chilling silence?" Then, with renewed tenderness, she continued, "A third tie of union exists between us; I long have owed you love, and gratitude, and now I owe you a life. My preserver!" she oried, with enthusiasm, "my preserver from worse than death, from crime, speak to me, I implore you!"

But silently I stood before her; fixedly regarding her with an impassive, inscrutable countenance. At last, I replied,

"You owe me no thanks, for my service is no gift; it is but the payment of a debt. I once took a life from your house, and now I return it." Before she could rejoin, I proceeded with sardonic calmness, "In your impassioned letter, I observe, that you never suppose the very possibility of change in me. You infer, I conclude, from the many proofs of affection I persevered in giving so long as I remained in England, that my passion must still continue to exist. But do you forget that two years have since elapsed; and that I passed them in a land where fidelity is little honoured, and less practised? The women of the East are ardent as their own sun, beautiful, and compliant—not callous, haughty, vindictive, and inflexible—not accustomed to reject the homage of their admirers."

Astonishment, fear, and horror were blended on her lovely countenance; at last, under the influence of her agony, she exclaimed, addressing herself, rather than me,

"God of heaven! can he—can he—have ceased to love me? Have I unsexed myself, discarded all the pride and modesty of woman's nature, to lay the most sacred feelings of the heart at the feet of one who has ceased to value them?—Oh, no! this may not, must not, shall not be!—Answer me,

in pity answer me, and tell me, that my suspicions are unfounded!" and as she grasped my hand, the warm tears gushed from her eyes, and fell upon it.

Perhaps, I judge through the medium of my own character, and in the knowledge of my own infirmity; but, I believe, that all our race are more or less ferocious. Many may live and die ignorant that this vice is latent in their breasts; but, because circumstances have not arisen to develop it, let them not therefore believe that they do not possess it. The minds of most of us are capable of a mood in which we should derive a demoniac pleasure from the sight of the tears which we ourselves have caused to trickle down the cheek of beauty. They tell an unquestionable tale of feminine softness, affection, and submission; and man, the savage, revels in the callous complacency of gratified vanity, and in the conviction of his power. There they stand in her bright eyes, visible, tangible, indisputable proofs of her weakness and of his strength, of her homage and of his supremacy; and he gazes on her exultingly, unpityingly, and glories in the pride of the conquest he has gained. There are few, I think, who, if they will avow the truth, will not admit that at some portion of their lives, they have entertained emotions akin to these.

What the sight of blood may have been supposed to effect in the minds of a gladiator or a Domitian, the touch of her warm tears then produced on me. They thrilled to my heart through every vein, and left the fire of hell behind.

"We last met," I oried, with a stern calmness, "on a fatal day; but do you remember our previous meeting! Do you remember my tears, my supplications? Do you remember my remorse, my abject submission, my despair, my vows of expiation?—I humbled myself to the dust before you; and I cried, Forgive me, but forgive me, and the rest of my life shall be devoted to atonement! By every possible claim that the most ardent love and the most sincere contrition could imagine, I conjured you to pardon me. And how did you

reply?-Immutable, inexorable, you stood like Fate over my future fortune, and you said, 'It shall come to you in darkness and in sorrow; in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.' You gave me curses for my tears, scorn for my humility, and hatred for my affection. And then my love was turned into bitterness, and I promised that I would be revenged. you whether I have not fulfilled my promise? Haughty destroyer of my peace on earth, of my salvation hereafter, where and what are you now?-I left you then, in the height of your pride, in the strength of your despotism, in the inflexibility of your vindictiveness. You stood like the destroying angel in my path, flashed the savage lightnings of your vengeance at my heart, and hurled me to the ground like a riven tree, blighted, sapless, blasted! But where and what are you now?-You will not answer! Beneath the roof of him you loathed, prostrate at the feet of him you contemned, your self-debasement is too great for utterance !-Well, listen then to me. When we met that day, M-, the vigor of youth was on me; I was as energetic in mind as in body. Look on me now-mark this withered arm, this hollow cheek, this emaciated frame. Think you, I will ever forgive the author of this change? Cold-blooded, selfish woman, as obstinate as irresolute—as obstinate in evil as irresolute in duty! And yet you say you love me. You love me? Do you remember my claims to your affection? Forget you so soon the misty morn, when blood-stained, dishevelled, breathing hatred and vengeance, you stood like a fallen spirit before me, invoked curses on my head, and denounced me, your adored now, as the assassin of your brother?—Faithless, fickle sister, remember you not that in boyhood, like a coward and a fiend, I stabbed him in the back: and that, in manhood, mine was the bullet that sent him to heaven or to hell?—Ha! ha! ha! even now I can see his convulsive leap !—It was his last!"

While I poured forth this devilish rhapsody, the unhappy girl, in the intenseness of her agony, had raised herself in the

bed; and, in this constrained position, remained glaring on me with eyes that appeared about to break from their sockets. When I had concluded, she uttered no sound, but the rigidity of her muscles was relaxed, and her head fell on her breast; then, raising it towards heaven, she exclaimed,

"God is just! Where I have sinned, there have I been punished. Great is the power of God!"

Her eyes closed, a ghastly paleness came over her, and she sank on the bed in a deathlike swoon.

I threw myself upon her body—I stamped—I foamed—I cursed—I blasphemed. But why continue this endless picture of revolting ferocity? She recovered from her trance, listened, and yielded to my wildly sincere protestations of contrition; and thus unwittingly supplied me with the power of renewing my crimes. Though I felt that mine might prove the triumph of the gladiator who died in receiving the submission of his enemy, yet I resolved to pursue it.

I assumed unto myself the power of Heaven. I drew an imaginary line, and I said, "So far will I go, and no farther. Such has been her offence, and such is the exact portion of retribution it deserves, and such shall be inflicted. I will then take her to my arms, devote my life to her service, and make her an object of envy to the proudest and to the happiest."

It was agreed that we should be married as soon as the necessary preparations could be arranged, which I volunteered personally to superintend through all their different departments. I instructed my sister to intrust me even with the selection of my bride's wardrobe.

Eight days passed, during which I was neither attentive nor neglectful, neither affectionate nor repulsive. If I did not woo with all the fervor of passion, I did not exhibit the coldness of indifference.—Whatever she might feel, I gave her no opportunity of declaring by word or look her sense of the alteration in my conduct.

. On the ninth day, I was the unseen auditor of a conversa-

tion between her and my sister, who was as yet in ignorance of my fiend-like violence on the morning of our interview. They were sitting at a window commanding an uninterrupted view of the magnificent lake beneath, the surface of which was as smooth and unbroken as that of a mirror.

"How lovely is the day," said my sister; "how heavenly! The earth, the sky, the water, all seem to smile. Surely you must sympathize in this jubilee of nature; it ought to reanimate the dead. Dear friend, you must learn to surmount this dejection."

She slowly replied, "I fear that it is too deeply radicated ever to be conquered."

"Say not so," rejoined my sister: "if you will not recur to the past, you must be happy—Look to the future:—let us talk of your marriage—the weather is in unison with all joyful things. I wonder what festivity my brother is preparing for us; reserved as he is, I can discover that he is occupied with some project. Are you not curious to learn what it is?—I am. If my mind were not engaged by other interests, I should be very prone to curiosity. It is a woman's privilege, and her duty.—Do you not think so?"

The only reply she could obtain was a melancholy smile.

- "I perceive," continued my sister, "that I must talk for both of us. Come, let us plan the routine of your domestic life; at what hour you will rise, when you will go to bed, the number of your equipages, the extent of your retinue, the situation of your abode, and the harmony of your jewels. Emeralds and diamonds, I think, assort most beautifully; and yet, there is something exquisitely enchanting in the modest pearl. My brother, you know, is richer than a king; and I need not tell you that he will devote himself and his wealth to the promotion of your happiness."
- "I hope he will," she said; " and I feel this desire less for mine than for his own sake."
- "I believe you implicitly, most disinterested of human creatures," cried my sister; "but why appear to throw a doubt

on that which is indubitable? Hope?—You must be happy. But you have not answered my questions. Tell me, then, where will you reside? My brother's power in this district is quite despotic; will you then settle here, and reign the queen of a feudal establishment, or will you travel for a year or two after your marriage? Shall we go to Paris, and see the court of the great king? or to Italy, the land of romance and literature, of poetry and painting, of marble palaces and stately ruins? But, dear sister, you depress me at last;—how melancholy you look! and that gloomy robe of yours so adds to the piteousness of your appearance;—how glad I shall be to see you in your bridal dress!"

Their conversation ceased, and I left the place of my concealment with a smile on my countenance—but not of pleasure.

The tenth, our nuptial day, arrived. My affianced bride arose, wan and languid, with an aching heart and a dejected spirit. Her health had received a fearful blow; paleness was on her cheek, and melancholy in her dark, beaming eye. And here, though the recurrence torture me, I feel irresistibly impelled to dwell for a moment on the extraordinary loveliness of those singular eyes. Liquid, mild, and pellucid as the fawn's, yet dark and penetrating, they could flash with the fire of love, or, as I too well knew, with the fire of hate. Sometimes sparkling and playful, more frequently sedate and reflecting, the individual they rested upon, felt conscious that he was under the inspection of one who possessed a mind which could correctly estimate the qualities of his own. But their most distinguishing feature existed in their peculiar and exquisitely beautiful colour. Were I to say that they contained a shade which resembled the dark rich redbrown of the raisin of Smyrna, the homely nature of my simile might suggest an idea the most opposite to my intention; and yet, I know not to what they could be compared with more accuracy; though they sometimes reminded me of the auburne of her own bright hair.

How often does the expression of those eyes on that memorable morn recur to me! How often now am I nearly maddened by the recollection of their piteous, plaintive, exquisitely pathetic glances! and how often now do I consider with wonder how I could have borne them without relenting! They beamed a melancholy, at once timid, submissive, deprecating, which might have touched the heart of a fiend—but, I was that worse thing—a bad man, intent on evil. And who, since the days of the first sinner, "that for an apple damned mankind," has ever been known voluntarily to turn from the commission of a contemplated and cherished iniquity?

We were at breakfast when her bridal dress was brought into the room. It was composed entirely of black crape. Under the first impulse of surprise, she addressed to me a look of inquiring wonder: but marking the expression of my eye, she read that this strange ill-omened apparel originated in no error of a menial, but in the preconceived determination of wilful malevolence.

"Surely," I cried, in reply to her interrogative glance, "such nuptial rites as ours cannot be solemnized according to common forms. We do not wed under common circumstances. Even in the feudal days of Catholicism and barbarity, when the curb of morality lay loosely on mankind, interdicts have been issued, kingdoms accused, and churches desecrated, on account of far less unholy marriages. Think not, then, that in these times of purer faith and conduct, I will consent that we shall be united without exhibiting at least some external mark of sorrow and penitence. I cannot consider myself superstitious, but were I to omit this trifling expiation, I should apprehend some awful catastrophe to our impious and unnatural union."

While I spoke, the mortal paleness of her cheek increased to a fearful degree; but she made no reply, and submissively taking the robe from my hand, withdrew to her chamber.

Shortly afterwards she descended, clothed in her funereal

habiliments. I had passed the interim in arraying myself in garments of a similar hue, and I now joined her with an appearance and air as sombre as her own. The tramp of horses was heard. I drew her to the window; and as she gazed on the objects beneath, I felt her hand tremble in my grasp.

She looked indeed on no festival array: no glittering retinue, no splendid equipages, no mirthful faces, no marks were there, to tell that one of the richest commoners of England was about to celebrate his union with one of her fairest daughters. And yet, she looked upon our bridal pageant—two carriages covered externally, and internally, with crape; each of them drawn by six stately horses, black—black as my own heart, in their hue. On their heads they bore a profusion of feathers, of the same funereal colour; and the two or three attendant menials were as darkly and gloomily arrayed.

"What think you of our nuptial procession?" I cried: "it is not absurdly gay, but it is congenial to our feelings, and to our relative circumstances."

She seemed as though her heart were breaking. I gazed on her with an intentness that sought to penetrate her soul. She turned on me her lovely eyes, and said with a holy fervor:—

"May God in heaven forgive you for this cruelty!"

My sister sat sobbing violently in a distant corner of the room. Previously she had adopted every means she could imagine to endeavour to divert me from my persecution. She had reasoned, and persuaded; threatened, and intreated; appealed to every feeling in succession—but in vain. She now arose to make a last effort, but reading on my face the stubbornness of my heart, she returned to her seat in silent despair.

"You do not," I cried, addressing my intended bride with ironical courtesy, "you do not disapprove of the arrangements I have made?"

On her cheek was no trace of a tear; her grief was beyond

this source of alleviation; but her dry eye beamed with a divine resignation, as she replied,

"You have only to inflict, and I will endure in silence, if not in patience."

A painful smile of assumed incredulity was my only rejoinder to this most touching proof of unequalled meekness and charity—of all that is beautiful in the human heart.

We descended; and I supported her into the first carriage. The attendant menials slowly arranged themselves; we began to advance at the solemn and stately pace of a funereal procession; and we were left alone in that dark prison to our own dark thoughts.

I had taken my seat opposite to her; and resolutely fixed my eyes upon her face with the unsteady desperation of a man, consciously sinning. For a moment, she intently examined my countenance; and then turned away with a mingled expression of hopelessness and pity. I began to feel the full iniquity of my demoniac conduct.

She spoke not; and oppressed, and humbled by my strong sense of my own unworthiness, I could not force my parched lips to utter an articulate sound. A word, perhaps, might have diminished the intensity of my agony; but, fettered, in that horrid silence, face to face, with my innocent victim, I feel and hope, that the oppressor must have suffered far more than the oppressed. Every instant seemed an eternity; my spirit sank as I gazed on the exquisite melancholy of her infinitely beautiful countenance, and I knew not where to turn to hide me from the consciousness of my baseness. I feared to meet her eye; yet, I was compelled to confront her: and I felt so keenly the ignominy of the tyranny I was acting, that I writhed beneath an agony of shame. How I then pined to escape from the thraldom of that accursed vehicle, and execrated myself, and the vindictiveness which had brought me there, God, and my own heart, alone can tell!

And yet, even then, in that very moment, I could not re-

solve to forego the task which I had imposed on myself. I would have given worlds to have possessed the power of retreating; but I was far beyond the efforts of self-control. I seemed to myself as though impelled by some dark agency independent of my will; and it would have been more feasible to have arrested in mid-air a rock hurled from the loftiest battlement, than to have diverted me from my fatal course.

We reached the village church, and, with a feeling of almost delirious exultation, I sprang from the accursed confinement. My sister, who had followed us in the other carriage, joined with me in assisting her to alight; and, affectionately supporting her, gently drew her towards the entrance. As they thus advanced, with their arms interlaced, strange and striking was the contrast between the funereal apparel of the one, and the white, flowing bridal robe of the other; for neither by intreaty nor threat could I induce my conscientious sister to descend to a co-operation in this unholy mockery. Even in that moment, which of the two I loved the more, I did not doubt; but, such was the blindness of my distempered mind, that my sister was then the one who excited my principal interest and pity.

A more strange and yet more impressive contrast awaited us; perhaps a more startling one can scarcely be imagined, than that which presented itself as we left the open day, the green and gay fields, and the fragrant earth and air, and stepped into the little church. Without, all was natural gaiety and life; within, were assembled all the artificial means of inspiring the mind with pain and apprehension. The walls, pews, ceiling, and floor, were covered with black crape; there was not a portion of the interior which revealed the material of which it was composed: wherever the eye turned, it rested on nought but continued blackness. Numerous flambeaux, impregnated with a sickly perfume, were scattered about; the smoke of which ascended in white heavy clouds to the roof, and then tumbled again to earth, oppress-

ing the senses, and increasing the uncertainty of the gloomy delusion. The windows, too, had all been carefully covered with hangings of the same lugubrious hue; but in some parts, the bright beams of the broad sun faintly penetrating the insufficient veil, painfully intermingled with the strange glare of the red light of the torches. On either side of the altar, and elevated to the level of its summit, by supporters appareled in all the trappings of the grave, were two coffins; the one bearing my name, the other, her own: blank spaces being reserved for the introduction of the age of the deceased, and the date of the death.

The general effect of the whole contrivance was such as might have excited uneasiness and displeasure in the minds of the most resolute; but, in the timid and apprehensive, unmitigated awe and terror. And this was the scene I had prepared for the celebration of my marriage.

But she did not quail; she looked around her with an unwavering glance, and the agitation of her features gradually subsided into the quietude of despair—of that despair which neither hopes nor fears. Once she turned upon me her deep liquid eyes, with an expression more piteous than reproachful, then raising them to Heaven, appeared to be absorbed in prayer. She seemed to have been penetrated by a deep sense of my unworthiness, and to have lost in this conviction both the power and the desire of combating with her grief.

Advancing to the altar, she resolutely read the inscriptions on the two coffins. Touching gently with her fore-finger the one which described her own name, she said, slowly and emphatically, and so calmly that I almost thought a smile rested for an instant on her pallid features,

"You will soon have to supply the omissions in this brief history of my career; perchance I may require this duty of you within seven days."

Perhaps of all passions, cruelty is that which is most strengthened by indulgence; the more it attains, the more

it desires. The man who has once tasted it, is inspired with an insatiate thirst; and the last cup of blood he has drained to the dregs, but renders its successor more enticing. Unlike other vices that decay with the strength of the body which engendered them, this flourishes in an inverse ratio, and only departs with the breath of its possessor, unless some rare shock intervene to recall him to a consciousness of his guilt. Instigated by the natural bent of their dispositions, the Mariuses, the Syllas, the Domitians, the Maximins, began their career of slaughter; but they continued it long after the original impulse must have ceased, in the mere love of the stimulus to which they had been accustomed.

These were the reflections of my after life: at the time of the occurrence of the actions which gave rise to them, I was little capable of analyzing the emotions which maddened me.

"You suffer," I said, "beneath the indignities which I am practising upon you. You may yet retreat. The snare is laid, the chain is forged, the bond is prepared, but bondage is not yet upon you. There is the altar; yonder waits the patient priest—the heifer is found and arrayed for the slaughter; but your freedom is still your own, and your voice can still prevent the accomplishment of the sacrifice. Speak!-mine must be a voluntary victim. I seek neither to lure nor to force you into the captivity you may regret; through your own weakness alone, and not through my strength, must I possess you. I wear no mask; I stand before you honestly and overtly with the stamp of hell upon me; and though I may be better, I cannot be worse than I appear. Speak! spontaneously I invest you with the power of discarding me a second time;" and I trembled with fear, as in the pride and madness of my heart I wantonly provoked this decision of my fate.

"Oh, avail yourself of the liberty which the tyrant has proffered you!" exclaimed my sister with energy. "De-

ceive not yourself, dear, suffering angel, with the vain thought that he can still entertain for you one particle of genuine affection. Strive not to attribute this infernal usage to the ebullition of passion, however insane; it is the cold-blooded result of systematized cruelty, and there is no hope here or hereafter, for the man that can have committed it. Oh, brother, brother! I live to lament the ties that unite us. In the words of the prophet I denounce you: 'Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given to him!'"

As she thus spoke, with all the elevation and the energy of the inspired writer whose language she adopted, she approached her unfortunate friend, and tenderly and lovingly supporting her, attempted to lead her from the church. But I interposed, in the intention of separating them:

"Touch me not! touch me not, brother!" she exclaimed, with a startling emphasis, and more startling gesture, " or your hand shall be even as the hand of Jeroboam!"

For a moment, I was disconcerted, nay, arrested, by this impetuous burst of honest passion; and I angrily and threateningly scowled on the enthusiastic girl; though even then, I could not forbear from honouring and revering her for her noble affection and integrity.

But the demon had set his seal upon me; I was his, for ever; and the interposition of an angel might have failed to have turned me from my purposes. The virtues and example of my high-minded sister caused me not even to waver; they fell harmlessly as pointless darts from the iron of my breast. I resolutely approached, and was more firmly renewing my attempt to separate them, when my intended bride, gently and tenderly extricating herself from the grasp of her clinging and reluctant friend, thus impressively addressed her:—

"Kind, consistent, beloved, and affectionate being, interest not yourself in the lot of one who has no longer a stake in this earthly game: Fate has defined for me my

course, and I must passively fulfil it. Be not too rigid with your brother; for he, alas, is not the only sinner; I, too, have committed a sin, and I will expiate it. Had I once listened to his contrition, perhaps he would not now have hardened his heart against my sorrow."

"O reflect, reflect!" cried her agitated friend; "for your sake, for my sake, dear, beloved one, do not resign yourself to this bad man!"

"Silence, sister!" I exclaimed, in a thundering voice, and in a paroxysm of insane and fearful passion.

The poor girl bent beneath my fury, and stood tremblingly, tearfully mute, by the side of her still more pallid friend; who with a thousand gentle caresses, affectionately endeavoured to restore her. Then turning to me, she exclaimed,

"Strange and inscrutable being, you seek to wed me, and yet you woo me thus!" and she gazed around her with a look of blended mournfulness and gentle reproach, which was ineffably pathetic. "But doubt not my determination. No!" she emphatically cried, " no! I will not retract. I can now adopt your own words and say, 'I had set my all upon a cast, and I will stand the hazard of the die.' I had long deemed you the possessor of the noblest qualities, of a high and virtuous, though an impetuous mind; but in discerning the falsity of my valuation, in learning that he whom I had almost elevated into a divinity is but-" she paused, and then added, "an erring man, I have lost the sole delusion that rendered existence desirable to me. You have embittered even the memory of the past; I can no longer say ' To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived today.' I possess not even that support, for I feel that there was no reality in my imaginings, and that I have been the shallow victim of my own self-deception. Without a hope, without a fear, why should I retract? I will not prove apostate to the ardent wish of years; and here I now stand, not in the weakness of abject affection, but in the strength of despair, prepared to die-your wife;" and she held forth

her hand. I seized it, and pressing it in triumph to my lips led her to the altar.

The ceremony was concluded. During its celebration she evinced no further emotion, but unresistingly allowed herself to be directed through its various forms in apparent unconsciousness, if not in real spathy.

We emerged from this oppressive and fetid scene of darkness and vapour into the pure air, light, and fragrance of Heaven.
The contrast was quite overwhelming; during a few moments
my sister and I remained confounded beneath its dazzling
influence. But cold, pale, rigid, and impassive, my unhappy
bride exhibited no more consciousness of external impressions
than the statue she resembled.

I suggested that we should walk to our home; she assented with the docility of infantine dependence. In the abstraction of her grief, in the utter prostration of her broken spirit, she seemed no longer to possess a will of her own, but to depend for her impulses on the agency of others. placed her arm on mine, she allowed me to caress it; I advanced, she vielded to the movement, and submissively followed. I grasped her hand, she returned the pressure; I approached my lips to her face, and with unconscious deference she turned her pale cheek to receive the kiss I bestowed. Not when she lay before me in suspended animation was she less the mistress of her reason than at this moment. As I contemplated this perfect personification of loveliness congealed by sorrow into a mere mockery of reason, my demoniac resolution began to fail me; but the rejection—the accursed rejection recurred to my mind. Beneath its blighting influence, like the Pharaob of old, again my heart was hardened, and I swore that she should drain the cup of retribution, even to the dregs.

During these reflections we had reached the summit of the hill we had been ascending. A portion of the wood close to, and immediately before us, had recently been felled, and in the space thus opened, appeared a handsome marble structure. The eyes of my sister expressed undisguised surprise and uneasiness, but the countenance of my bride still retained its painful rigidity. We advanced still nearer, and an inscription then became visible, to which in stern silence I motioned the attention of my wife. Aroused by my action, by the singularity of the scene, perhaps by a prophetic apprehension, with a faltering step, and a cheek alarmed into life, as though under the influence of some infernal fascination, she slowly obeyed the lingering motion of my finger, and tracked it until she reached the tomb, and read—

ERECTED IN ETERNAL RECORD OF THE CRIME, ON THE SCENE OF ITS PERPETRATION, TO THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD; BY HIM WHO COMMITTED THE MURDER, AND THEN MARRIED THE SISTER OF THE MURDERED.

As though a bolt from Heaven had pierced her heart, she was hurled to the earth with the weight and lifelessness of a stone.

We bore her to our home. During six days she lingered in incessant delirium on the verge of eternity. I dare not describe her ravings, her denunciations, or her prayers. Even now, were I minutely to recall those cursed hours of hellish torture, I could think myself into a frenzy equal to her own.

On the morn of the seventh day, she gave symptoms of returning consciousness; before noon, she awakened into life. She gazed around her with intentness; her eyes alighted on my sister and on myself, and she testified her recognition with a melancholy but serene smile. Her attention was then arrested by the sound of the bell of the village-church tolling to announce the commencement of the service.

"It is the Sabbath," she cried; "a day of peace and thanksgiving, and a fitting day for our re-union. My husband, my sister, give me your hands."

We complied, and she pressed them tenderly; her touch was as cold as thawing ice. The expression of her eye, though calm, was painfully plaintive; and her feeble yet still

eminently musical voice thrilled through our hearts as she continued:

"In this last, awful moment, I recur to my past life; and, save the one fatal act which I am now expiating, I trust that Were I doomed to retrace the I have not much to lament. deluding scene which I am about to quit, in one only respect would I seek to depart from the course which I have pursued; I would more frequently devote my thoughts to a communion with my Creator. The habit of prayer insensibly elevates the mind, and weakens the force of its worldly affections. 'Religion is the only thing found on earth which, like the bee, draws from the bitter and the sweet the same honied juice; and, though many ways have been devised for man to govern his nature, there is but this one principle which can ever raise him above it.' I now feel with gratitude to Heaven, that I have not neglected this consolation: but I have not cultivated it to the extent of my power."

"You are an angel!" gasped my sobbing sister;—but I had neither voice nor tears.

"Be comforted, dear girl," exclaimed my unhappy bride, tenderly drawing toward her her affectionate friend, until their lips met. Then giving her one feeble but long and passionate embrace, she resumed her discourse with more than her previous serenity.

"I do not ask you not to lament my loss, for I know that you possess not the power of complying with this demand; but I implore you to repress your feelings in this moment, and conceal from me the grief which I cannot alleviate. Death is upon me; and I feel, and see, and judge with an unwonted perception, as though I were imbued with the spirit of prophecy. Do not, then, I pray, disturb this holy composure, nor again reduce me to the endurance of emotions which partake of the follies and vanities of the world. For your sake, my friend—my husband," she continued, addressing herself to me, "I could wish to have been spared a

little longer, to have devoted myself to the restoration of your peace of mind;—but God's will be done! To you and to your love, my sister, I now intrust him; and the last supplication of your dying friend is, that you will devote every affection—every energy, to the mitigation of his anguish. Hear me again declare that I feel that I have wronged him.—Had I listened to him in his agony, this retribution had not befallen us both; but, in the intemperance of my passion, I rejected his contrition, and the evil that has ensued has alighted, I hope—oh, how I hope!—most heavily on the head of her who was the source of it!"

She paused for a moment, and then continued:

"Hear that village bell: how many vain associations it suggests! But though I cannot regard the past without an emotion, I am already above its influence. How levely is the day!—Open the casement, dear sister, and let me breathe the pure air of heaven. Now move me into the sun; I long to feel its glorious beams play once more upon these icy limbs!"

We did as she directed; and she closed her eyes, and lay for a few moments silently inhaling the gentle balmy breeze that floated over her pale face. She threw back her hair, and exposed her brow and temples to its refreshing influence. Again she spoke:

"Earth is fair, and many are the dear delights which it contains; but this which I now enjoy is the highest and purest of them all. Often have I stood beneath the blue sky, and on the lake, or on the hill, revelled in the possession of this best blessing; but never knew I until this moment the extent of the bliss it could confer!—And now, my beloved sister, you can yet farther soothe the bitterness of this parting hour. I could wish before I die to be once more under the exalting influence of music: beneath its inspirations, I might better sustain the pang of separation; and I feel that I need its divine power to raise me above the fascinations which still enthral me, and its buoyant wings to pilot my soul to Heaven.

Embrace me then again, dear friend;—and now I entreat you to comply with my request. Descend, and play to me that beauteous hymn to the Virgin, Maria santissima, madre amata, which I so loved in the days of my happiness."

Oh, God! how did I survive that moment?—Had this angel victim of my accursed ferocity striven, in the deadliness of revenge, to stab me to the soul, she could have devised no wiser mode than this simple allusion to the hour of our first meeting. But groan, word, nor look betrayed the agony that was consuming me; though any crime but mine might have been expiated by what I then endured.

After a last and passionate embrace, with a long, lingering look and a breaking heart, my poor sister left the room; and soon the magnificent peals of the organ filled and thrilled through the house. The face of my bride became illuminated with a celestial expression, and the agency of Heaven was visibly upon her. She grasped my hand with a fervent, pressure, and, closing her eyes abandoned herself to her divine aspirations. As the melody 'proceeded, her hold relaxed, and without a sigh, a look, the shadow of a manifestation, the pure spirit quitted its mortal tenement, and I sustained the arm of the dead.

Fifty years have passed since that day; one half of them in the indulgence of every ruthless and desperate passion. I deemed existence an injury; I thought myself aggrieved in having been created; and I felt evil towards all my race. In the profligate court of Charles, and afterwards in that of Louis, I found an ample field for my misanthropic impulses. Like Ishmael, "my hand was against every man, and every man's hand against me." And yet I prospered in the world, and earned in it those distinctions of name and renown which others only obtain through the exertions of wilful and systematized ambition. At the head of armies, in the strife of courts, in the dangerous intrigues of internal politics, in foreign diplomacy, in private faction, or in popular tumult,



success invariably attended me. During this long career, I was the envied of the many; and even now, I could direct universal attention to my obscurity, by revealing the designation under which I drew upon myself the eyes of Europe. But neither wealth, power, nor homage softened the agony of my remorse; within me was the worm that never dieth.

As I advanced in life, the fiery restlessness which had hitherto involuntarily propelled me into energetic exertion, forsook me; and the last five-and-twenty years of my guilty existence have been past, I hope, less erringly than the two first. In solitude and in penitence, in prayer and self-imposed privation, have I striven to subdue the strong wickedness of my heart; but hæret lateri lethalis arundo, it goads me night and day, and an ocean of tears could not wash out the memory of the one great crime of my bad life. For ever and ever, the words of Adoni-bezek recur to me:—"As I have done, so God hath requited me."

No human effort or power can restore me to tranquillity. Since the hour of her death, the curse of Heaven has been on me and mine; my sisters have died childless, and I live the last of my race. In the morning I wish for the evening, and in the night I wish for the day. The heaven above me is as brass, and the earth beneath me is as iron. Above, below man's wo and joy, I prowl over the face of the land alone amongst millions: an alien to the common passions of my race, I can neither weep with the mourner, nor smile with the happy.—And yet, I fear to die! Existence is my bane, the future is my dread; I loathe what is, but I tremble at what is to be.—May this expiate—May the Almighty be merciful to a wretch who cannot forgive himself!

I do not hope that this gloomy career of crime and misery can interest, but it may instruct. Though I cannot bequeath a moral legacy as striking as that of the Moorish king, I will yet strive to contribute my mite, though a posthumous one, to the welfare of mankind. I have perpetrated and seen so

much evil, have so writhed beneath the horrors of remorse, that I would willingly make any exertion to save a fellow-creature from its stings. I shall not then deem this painful record to have been written in vain, if my example and fate serve but to turn one sinner to repentance, or to impress on the mind of one waverer the conviction that

VIRTUE IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF HAPPINESS.

NOTES.

Page 63, line 7.

Before the rude Thessalian had caused the young and the lovely to be superseded by the staid matron of fifty.

The office of priestess in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi was for many years fulfilled by a youthful and beautiful virgin; but in consequence of a Thessalian of the name of Echecrates having assaulted one of them, it was decreed that for the future none but women above the age of fifty, and correspondingly ugly, should undertake the sacred office.

Page 74, line 22.

I could be inspired with that of Mezentius.

A tyrant of Italy, who used to tie the living to the dead, and leave them without food to perish in this fearful company.

Page 101, line 36.

Like Regulus in his murderous cask.

Among other tortures inflicted on Regulus, after he was taken by the Carthaginians, was that of confining him in a barrel lined with iron spikes, in which he was rolled until he expired in infinite agony.

Page 109, line 16.

The triumph of the Gladiator, who died in receiving the submission of his enemy.

An Athenian, of the name of Arrichion, who, prostrate on the ground, and half suffocated in the grasp of his enemy with a dying effort, seized him by the foot, and broke one of his toes. The anguish of the fracture caused

him to cry for quarter, in the very moment that Arrichion himself expired. But he had lived to be victor, and the judges awarded that his body should be crowned.

Page 118, line 17.

Or your hand shall be even as the hand of Jeroboam.

"And it came to pass, when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not put it in again."—1 Kings, chap. xiii.

Page 125, line 17.

As I have done, so God hath requited me.

- "But Adoni-bezek fled, and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes.
- "And Adoni-bezek said, Three score and ten kings having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me!"—The Book of Judges, chap. i.

Page 125, line 33.

Though I cannot bequeath a moral legacy as striking as that of the Moorish king.

Abderame, or Abdalrahman the third, the great Caliph of Cordova, who left in his own hand this estimate of the value of earthly grandeur and felicity:—"Fifty years have I reigned. Riches, honours, pleasures, I have enjoyed them all—exhausted them all. The kings, my rivals, fear me, and envy me, yet esteem me. All that men desire has been lavished on me by Heaven. In this long space of apparent felicity I have calculated the number of days in which I have been really happy; they amount to fourteen. Mortals, learn how to appreciate greatness, the world, and life."

LA BELLA TABACCAIA.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

NINA was an orphan, and, at the age of fifteen, mistress of a snuff and tobacco shop in Pisa, under the discreet guidance of an aunt, who boarded and lodged with her by virtue of her experience. The stock in trade, a little ready money, and two houses in the suburbs of Leghorn, were her patri-She had the fairest complexion with the darkest ringlets that ever were formed together; and though no one ever criticised her lips as rather too full, yet some fastidious admirers objected to the largeness of her eyes-but they could not have remarked their lustre and expression, nor the beautiful jet lashes which shaded them. She was called La The students of the University, as they Bella Tabaccaia. returned from lecture, always peeped in the shop to see if Nina was behind the counter; and if she was, nine out of ten walked in and asked for segars. There they lighted them one after another at the pan of charcoal, and by turns, puffing awhile for invention, ventured on some gallant compliments. If these were received with a smile, as they generally were, and often more roguishly than would be considered within the rules of a bench of old English ladies, then away they went to strut on the Lung'arno with a much gaver notion of themselves. The grave ones of the neighbourhood thought it a pity she could encourage such idle talk; and the aunt constantly advised her to go into the inner room whenever those wild young fellows made their But Nina had all the vivacity, the joyousness appearance.

of youth, almost of childhood, and defended herself by saying, "La! aunt, there can be no harm in their merriment; for my mother used to tell me, young men with serious faces were the only dangerous ones." And the mother's authority never failed in silencing the aunt.

Late one evening, a student entered while Nina was alone in the shop. After a single glance, he sat down by the side of the counter, took up a knife that lay there, and began seemingly to play with it, but with a countenance that betrayed the most violent agitation. The poor girl never having witnessed any thing like despair, imagined he was intoxicated; and, as the safest means of avoiding insult, remained firmly in her place. On a sudden, the youth, grasping the knife in his hand, seized her by the hair, and threatened death if she did not immediately, and without a word or a scream, give him her money. Instead of complying. quietly and on the instant, in her fright she shricked for help, and struggled with him. Had not the youth felt a touch of pity even in that moment of frenzy, she would have been destroyed. For her struggles were in vain, and the knife was at her bosom, when some passengers hearing her cries, together with the neighbours from the adjoining houses. ran in and seized him. Without further question, they placed him in the hands of the Sbirri, who led him directly to the police, and Nina was required to follow. Her evidence was written down, and she was ordered to sign the paper. To this she complied, with no other thought than that she had not been guilty of the slightest exaggeration. As she laid down the pen, the officer assured her she might rely on the utmost redress for such an outrage, as her evidence was not only the clearest, but it completely tailied with, the prisoner's confession; and ended with-"Be under no apprehension, my good girl, for you will shortly see him in yellow," alluding to the colour which those convicts wear who are sentenced to hard labour for life. It was not till these words were uttered, that she, still trembling in her

fears, had once reflected on the punishment; when, starting as she heard them, she looked piteously in the officer's face, and said, "I hope not, sir; he has not robbed me-not hurt me-not in the least. Pray let me have that paper again; and I-I am sorry I came here-indeed I am!" She was told he was now in the hands of the law, and it was neither in her power, nor in theirs, to release him; and that as it was the law, not the individual, that punished a criminal, she need not accuse herself in the slightest degree of severity, whatever his sentence might be. Incapable of replying to this argument, she could do nothing but repeat her request for the paper, when she was answered by a smile, and told she was quite a child. "Do, do give me that paper," she continued; "let nothing more happen; if I can pardon him, why cannot you?" At this she was called a silly child. Nina looked round for the prisoner, but he had been led to his dungeon. "O God!" she cried, "how unhappy does this make me! I know, sir, I am, as you say, a child; but can you make a child so miserable?" The officer then spoke with greater kindness, reasoning on the impossibility of his vielding, and thus she was dismissed.

The aunt was waiting at home, in a thousand ecstacies at so providential an escape from a robber and a murderer; to all which Nina scarcely replied, but went to her pillow weeping, "and pity, like a naked new-born babe," lay in her bosom. Thus in two short hours was the laughing gaiety of this young creature gone for ever. She was the means, it mattered not how innocently, of driving a fellow-being into wretchedness and infamy. That her sorrow was unreasonable, few, perhaps, will deny. However, Nina had never learned to take enlarged views of the duties of citizenship; nor did it once enter her head to ask herself whether she was right or wrong. Before sunrise the old lady was surprised at being wakened by her niece, and to see her hastily dressing herself to go once more to the police. This created a long discussion. "Well, well," said the niece,

"I will go alone; but then I can have little hope. You, aunt, that know the world, may find some method of softening the hearts of these cruel officers. I have but one friend now that both my parents are dead; and sure she will not refuse the first earnest prayer I make!" This appeal could not be withstood. Nina ran to the looking-glass to put on her bonnet, when she perceived several bruises on her neck, the marks of his rude hands,—they would be observed, and could not be mistaken. Instantly inquiring if it was not rather chilly that morning, she at the same time, without waiting for an answer, took up a large shawl, pinned it close under her chin, and then waited in the mildest manner in the world for her friend.

At a very early hour the convicts employed to clean the streets begin their labour. When Nina arrived at the corner of the Borgo she heard the clanking of their chains, and clinging with both hands on her aunt's arm, remained motionless while they slowly passed. Though accustomed to the sight from her infancy, she now for the first time regarded them attentively. They were accompanied as usual by their guards, armed with muskets and cutlasses, and came heavily chained together in couples; the two first with brooms, followed by those who drag on a cart, and then two others with their shovels. One was clothed in yellow; the girl looked at him with tears in her eyes. "I never thought," said she, "these men were so wretched!" "Santa Maria!" exclaimed the aunt, "and what did you think? Would you have them as comfortable as good Christians like ourselves? You will see, as I told you before, the gentlemen of the police will call me a simpleton for going to them on such an errand." In this she was mistaken; nobody noticed her. Nina's earnestness astonished the officers. They had never seen or heard of anything of the like, and could not under-That she should be in love with the prisoner was out of the question, as it appeared in her evidence his person was unknown to her until the evening before; and a young woman never makes a present of her heart (so they argued) to a ruffian who comes to take it with a knife. In the absence, therefore, of this suspicion, she seemed of a more human, if not a more heavenly nature, than any saint in the calcular. And as they sympathised in her distress—for how could they help it?—their compassion was startled into something favourable to all sorts of criminals. The worst was, they could not grant her request.

It is high time to talk of our student-poor Gaetano, in his flungeon! He had been noted by the professors for his application at the University, and endeared to his companions by his never-failing cheerfulness and good temper. What a dreary change! And he was the favourite of his father, who though not rich, still represented with some attempts at dignity, an ancient family in Pistoia. Young Gaetano's story, I am sorry to own it, is a very bad one, as it bears a resemblance to that doleful tragedy, George Barnwell. Italians, to their praise be it spoken, seldom put faith in that love which is to be purchased by costly presents—they know better; yet when guilty of such folly, their extravagance is often boundless. It was so with this youth. After having on every possible pretence obtained money from his father, and favished it on his Milwood, she began to put on her cold looks; then in a short time, her door was closed against a pennyless suitor. Why he attacked Nina seemed inexplicable. Had Pisa no respected Signor with a heartful of self-complacency as his pockets were of money, walking in his own orchard, and moralizing on his own goodness? It is certain, however, none but this innocent, defenceless girl struck his brain at that desperate moment. Perhaps there was a feeling of revenge against the sex. Your only true woman-hater is he who becomes trammelled in the magic of one whom his reason bids him despise. If this hint at an explanation should be objected to, I willingly refer the whole case to a general assembly of Scotch metaphysicians—they can settle everything. My business is with facts. When Nina

heard the story, she pitied him more than ever; and if this is sneered at as an immodest kind of pity among the cruelly virtuous, let her inexperience in their ways be considered in her favour. So deep an impression did it make on her mind, that it stamped her character for ever. Instead of a laughing, thoughtless girl, she became at once a woman. brow was more tranquil, a milder brightness shone in her eyes, a far sweeter smile played upon her lips. Happiness, she thought, should not be divided; and, as the thought came over her, not a living being but shared in her sensibility. There is not a greater mistake than to imagine the characters of either sex are formed solely by the first impulses of love. Any of the passions, if thoroughly roused, or even pain of body will have the same effect, and sometimes at a very early age. Grief, as I myself have witnessed, will act like inspiration; suddenly converting a childish decility in a lad into a manly fortitude and self-decision. The soul of Nina was awakened by the throbs of pity.

The trial came on; Gaetano's father hastened to Pisa, busy with his advocates in the defence of his son, but without seeing him. Insanity was attempted to be proved. Every effort availed nothing. When pronounced guilty, the father returned to Pistoia, thanking Heaven he had yet another son, and he should be his heir—a boy whom hitherto he had sourcely noticed, and who was at that time educating for the Church. Nina did better; she privately went to the houses of the Judges, and knelt before them, and implored the most lenient sentence. Whether her intercession was of some value, or whether there appeared to be more of passion than depravity in the prisoner, the sentence was certainly milder than was expected—three years' hard lahour.

When Gaetano appeared among the other convicts, every body ran to Nina and officiously pointed him out. Without some information it is probable she never would have recognised him. He passed before her door with that dull eye which those who have any shame instinctively acquire, seeing

as it were, everything and nothing at the same time. She gazed at him fearfully and solemnly by turns, but did not utter a syllable. Always to see, or what is the same thing to the imagination, always to be liable to see, a fellow-creature who has injured us, suffering for his crime in toil and in chains, must after awhile excite the compassion of the sternest. It may be supposed that Nina's humanity could not have endured it. Not so; instead of avoiding him, she would walk through those parts of the city where he was employed, and frequently cross before him in the hope of attracting his attention, merely that he might see how sorrowful she was, and then she thought he would be happier. But when after some time she suspected-(and the reader cannot but be prepared for so natural a transition)—there were other emotions in her bosom of a more tender nature than pity, she feared to watch him but from a distance. It ought not to create surprise, that as she could never drive him from her mind, he should win her heart even in a convict's clothes; though possibly in the gayest dress, and with the handsome lively countenance for which he was once admired, he might not have raised the slightest interest in her affections.

Still she retained the name of La Bella Tabaccaia; yet it was commonly followed by a whisper that once she was far more beautiful; and indeed her cheeks and lips grew paler every day. This, together with the change of expression in her features, and her always choosing the earliest hour to go to mass, gave rise to many rumours. Some asserted she had been shamefully deserted by some one whom nobody knew; others, that she looked forward in terror towards the day when her enemy was to be released; and others, that she lived in constant dread of assassination—among which last was her wise aunt. Only one person, a lover of Nina's, discovered the secret; and he, as he has often declared, traced in her artless conduct the gradual progress of her love for Gaetano, from the first moment

she saw him in the street. This may be going too far back; -yet it is no matter. He behaved generously, nobly to her; carefully avoiding to hint at his discovery, and offering his services to alleviate the hardships of his rival's fate. What a delight to speak of him! I wish I might give him his name! Money is sometimes slipped into the hands of the convicts by their friends, while the guards pretend not to observe it, or turn their eyes another way. This was attempted by that young man with Gaetano, but nothing could induce him to receive it. To every offer of kindness he neither replied, nor evinced by his manner that the words were understood. He was told that Nina was unhappy, and still he retained the same lethargic look. Every sense, his very soul, appeared to be fettered more heavily than his limbs. Failing in this, the young man visited the prison, and hoped to afford some relief to Nina in speaking of the attention paid to their health and cleanliness; and he described the discipline within the walls, not more severe than the mildest government could suggest; and Nina, as she listened to him, silently laid her cheek upon his hand. She, too, in her evening walks, would lead her aunt towards the Ponte a Mare, and there lean upon the parapet as if watching the rushing of the Arno through the arches. The prison stands at the end of the bridge. At the Ave Maria she heard them at their prayers; and sometimes her ear was startled at loud singing and laughter through the barred windows; for men, whether in a prison or a palace, however wretched their crimes or their follies ought to make them, will still, as in defiance, give loose to a wild jollity; and, alas! it is the only enjoyment that remains for them.

The three years crawled drearily away, and at last the hour arrived for Gaetano to be set at liberty. A parcel was left for him at the prison door, with a message that it came from his father. Gaetano seized it from the keeper's hands, and throwing himself passionately on the ground, pressed it to his breast, for he had feared he was abandoned by every one

he loved, and then he covered his face with it and bathed it with his tears, the first he had shed within these walls. Suddenly he started up and tore open the parcel, eagerly searching for a letter—there was none—it contained nothing but a The cruel meaning in this present common sailor's dress. could not be misconstrued, and the son looked at it with a mixture of grief and indignation, "Yes, he shall be obeyed!" he muttered to himself: and at that instant Nina's lover, with his unwearied goodness, came in to warn him of his father's anger, and to advise not to seek a reconciliation too hastily. "Besides," he continued, "your father is ill and weak-bed-ridden for these five months-in great pain,and it is thought his disease is incurable." "Then," replied Gaetano, "I must see my father ere he dies, and he shall bless me-I know he will; and then, since he commands it, I will fly my country!" He hurried to put on the sailor's clothes, and instantly, with his free unfettered feet, speeded towards Pistoia.

When this news was carried to Nina, she trembled with apprehension. From all she could learn, the father's rage was implecable, and the crime of staining his family pride was never to be pardoned. She dreaded that Gaetano might be driven to some other act of despair worse than before-suicide, perhaps-and therefore, quietly avoiding observation, resolved to follow. A coach, similar to a stage coach in England, was on the start for Lucca. There was yet a single place vacant, and when she entered it the driver gladly whipped his horses forward. " Have I not done wrong?" she asked herself, "for no doubt he has taken the nearer path across the mountains. This silly coach—how it loiters. My own feet were better!" At Lucca she impatiently left her company, forgetting all ceremony, to the astonishment of a gentleman with a ribbon in his button-hole. She sought not for another conveyance, certain that her pace would be quicker than the lazy trot of such horses as had borne her from Pisa; and somewhat touched with

shame at riding at her ease while Gaetano toiled on foot. On she walked, and in a few minutes came to that tedious part of the road, where the eye sees in a straight line, and on a flat full three miles in prospect, between two double rows of trees. She strained her sight, but could distinguish no one in a sailor's babit. She quickened her steps. road then takes a slight turn, and there is again a similar prospect and for the same extent. Still not seeing him, she cried out,-" Oh! where is he? Dear Madonna, Queen of Heaven, do but preserve him in his right mind, and I will be content! Let his father's arms receive him, and I will return-happy-and he shall never know that he might find a home in mine!" Coming into Pescia, she observed some children building their clay-houses on the side of the bridge, and perceiving that their work must have lasted from the morning, she hoped they could give her some information. From them she learnt that such a one had passed, though they disagreed as to the time, and described him very doubtfully; however, one among them, a little creature with a sharp thin face, satisfied her that it could be no other but Gaetano, by his wonder at his long quick strides. Now she felt more light of heart, and gazed upon the mountains clothed in a thousand varieties of trees and shrubs, and forming a kind of amphitheatre above the city, and her eyes wandered over the rich luxuriant plain till her soul was elevated by the beauty of nature, and forgetting the Madonna, she prayed direct to the Creator.

At that mement Gaetano knocked at his father's door. The servant who opened it, though a stranger to him, looked confused as if he had been taught to expect such a visitor; and without asking any questions, left him on the threshold. Presently he returned, and in a low voice told him he was threatened to be dismissed from the house if he did not immediately close the door upon him. "Then do your duty," said Gaetano, "and shut me out,"—and as he spoke he retired one step backward,—"but tell my father, I only desire to

touch his hand before I leave him for ever." No reply was brought, and the son waited there without motion like a statue. At last the window of the room where the father lay was opened. The wretched old man on a sick bed, his bed of death, with a voice scarce human, shrieked at his once beloved boy in curses. His fury was exasperated instead of being subdued by his own sufferings-I will not, I cannot repeat his words. Gaetano stood firmly, and heard them with a painful smile. But when they ceased and there was silence, he sunk upon his knees, with his body supported against the door-post. The window was closed. Passengers stopped in the way and whispered, and knew not how At last a little girl from a neighbour's was sent with food, and as she said, "Dear Signor, eat! eat!" Gaetano laughed. One circumstance I must not omit: his brother, the now favoured son, stole softly round from the garden door and kissed him, but for a short moment, and then fled swiftly back, lest his love should be noticed by any one in the house. Towards night-fall, the sympathy of the town's people increased, and collecting there in a crowd, they began to talk loudly and impatiently. This still more enraged the father: he ordered the window to be opened again, but his curses were answered by a cry from the people in the street; and a poor cripple, a beggar, exclaimed, "Peace! peace! irreverent old man!" and they heard him no more.

Nina was then forcing her way through the crowd. She had just arrived, pale and heartsick, but not weary. Regardless of the bystanders, or rather, not giving them a thought, she knelt down close to Gaetano with her arms crossed upon her breast like one of Raphael's angels, and prayed to him to forgive her. He heard her gentle voice as a voice from Heaven, and lifting his feeble eyelids saw who it was. "Forgive you!" he replied, "I forgive all—all—even my father! every one but myself!" And striving to raise himself from the door-post, he sunk senseless into her arms. She believed his heart was burst—that he was either dead or

dying—and screamed for help. The window above her head closed against her cries.

. Many among the crowd sprung forward to her assistance, and they bore Gaetano to an inn, while Nina walked by his side without a word, his hand fast locked in hers. On the following morning he was in a high fever, which after a few days became so violent, it threatened speedily to destroy him. All the while Nina was his kind nurse; and in spite of the restraint laid upon unmarried women in Italy, she alone attended him. "Entire affection scorneth nicer hands." The brother often visited him, but secretly and at night, with all the circumspection of a gallant to his mistress. At length Nina had the joy to see his health return, hanging over him with her sweet, quiet smiles, till he gazed upon her, forgetting he was unhappy. In a few days he wondered if it was possible to be unhappy again. And the roses began to blush on her cheeks more beautifully than ever they had blushed Yet they never talked of loving each other-it was a waste of words-neither of them had a doubt of it. One evening, the brother, as he paid his stolen visit, was not in the least surprised to hear they were married—why should he? And he wished them joy, and embraced Gaetano, and kissed the hand of his sister-bride, with a happiness almost equal to their own.

There was a good opportunity for opening a snuff-shop at Pescia, so the young couple resolved to fix themselves there. The aunt and all the stock in trade were removed from Pisa in the same cart to the new shop. Gaetano was presently initiated into the mysteries of weights and scales and canisters, delighted with his industry as his wife stood by his side. Yet at times a pang came across him as he thought of his father. At the end of six months a priest called and said his genitore had forgiven him. This was merely effected by the horrors of his faith; and therefore, the greatest bigot could have received but little comfort from it. In fact, he did no more than forgive him as a Christian; with this proviso, that

he would never see him or leave him a farthing. Seen after this the old man died. Immediately the brother effered to divide the property; and upon his repeated entreaties, Gaetano did receive a part. "I cannot take half," said he, "because you, with a large house and no shop, are a poorer man than I am."

The aunt is more demure than ever. There are so many stories abroad of the infamy of an *Illustrissimo* becoming a shopkeeper, and of a respectable girl marrying a convict, that she is nervous. She goes about protesting she had no hand in the matter, that nothing of the kind ever entered her hand, and thus gets suspected most undeservedly, as a sly, goodfor-nothing, wicked woman.

True love, they say, must be "itself alone," not the offspring of any other passion; and that affection springing
from gratitude or pity is by no means love; with many more
wise sayings which I forget. To all this I have nothing to
reply,—I only refer such dogmatizers to the principal sauffshop in Pescia. Gaetano and Nina have now three children.
The youngest is the most beautiful infant I ever saw, "especially at the mother's breast;" mind, reader, these are the
husband's own words, and you are not to make me accountable for so dainty an observation.

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY'S PICTURE GALLERY.

BY MRS. GHARLES GORE.

"I was this morning walking in the gallery, when Sir Roger entered at the end opposite to me, and, advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations, the De Coverleys, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company, who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures; and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself on his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper end of the gallery, when the knight faced towards one of the pictures."—Spectutor, 169.

"A movest creature," said I, placing my hand athwart my forehead by way of sight-shade, with as much the air of a connaisseur as I could manage to assume.

"A dear one,—a prudent, and a virtuous," rejoined the knight, turning sharply away, and betaking himself to his box, as if he had made an offort to look upon an object connected with painful recollections. Nay, if I am not mistaken, there was a moisture on the lace of his sleeve as he raised his arm to his eyes, affecting to ward off the sun-beams glaring through the windows. For worlds I would not have entrapped him into the discussion of the subject; but reading curiosity in my looks, he paused when we reached the door of the galtery, and, tapping me significantly on the hand, said in a low voice, "I have her history written out in fair text hand among my family papers. My coasin Ursula was the choicest scribe in this part of the country. You will find

specimens of her best Italian manner in the great family recipe book; but if you are inquisitive touching the memoir of her sister Milicent, why 'tis heartily at your service." The word "prudent" was a stumbling-block. I was ever inclined to banish from among the cardinal virtues, the prim, self-contented, prudish-looking damsel with the looking-glass; and since even Saint Augustine pleads guilty to a similar prejudice, I,—a sinner, need not hesitate to avow the antipathy. Nevertheless, the following sketch of family history could not but interest my feelings; and I have no scruple in pointing out the picture of "the Lady Keswycke at her looking-glass," as the sweetest personification of Prudence that has exemplified the duty of self-examination since the days of Penelope.

Sir Lawrence de Cressingham, of Cressingham Hall, was the friend and companion of the great Clarendon;—sat in the Long Parliament, retired to France on the ruin of the royal cause, and died in exile. In compensation for these disasters, his son, Sir Giles, received at the Restoration offers of a pension and peerage; both of which he stoutly declined, as being connecting links with a court towards which he was anything but favourably disposed. Retiring, therefore, to the estate or remnant of estate still pertaining to the family name, he devoted his time to its cultivation, and his thoughts to the rearing of two daughters, bequeathed him by his wife, Ursula de Coverley, grand-aunt to the good knight, whom it was the ambition of his frugality to raise to the condition of co-heiresses.

Unfortunately, however, little Milicent and Ursula were not the sele objects of his solicitude. The charge of a young cousin, son to a younger brother of Sir Lawrence, who had fallen on the field of Worcester, leaving a young wife and posthumous child to the mercy of his then wealthy relatives, was entailed upon him with the family estates; and Francis de Cressingham grew up as the sole child of the house, till, thirteen years after his melancholy birth, little

Milicent made her appearance to initiate the heart of the bluff Sir Giles into the still warmer tenderness of actual paternity.

Frank, a spirited lad, with the wild blood of his race already boiling in his veins, was not jealous of the little stranger;-nay, he would often snatch the pretty doll into his arms and cover it with kisses, till the lady mother shricked aloud lest its delicate frame should be injured by his rough caresses. But however blustering elsewhere, Francis became a tamed lion on approaching the nursery; and when, a few years afterwards, the Lady de Cressingham died of a slow decay, there was no one in the house whose endearments afforded consolation to her two moping motherless girls, saving those of "cousin Frank." His visits to the Hall from college or his regiment were hailed as signals for a general holiday. Sir Giles prepared for a carouse with the neighbouring squires; Milicent, who at that period inclined to the coquette, began to gather the bright rings of her chestnut hair under a fontauge of the newest fashion; while Ursula, her younger sister, would sit for hours at her spinet, studying sonatas for his amusement. The worthy knight was scarcely prouder of his young relative than were the two girls; and during the perils encountered by the combined fleet in which young De Cressingham was serving with honour as a volunteer, Dr. Esdras, the family chaplain, could by no means determine which of the three displayed most fervour at morning and evening prayers, in commending to heaven the destinies of those who "travel by land or by water."

Sooth to say, the reverend divine regarded much of this tenderness as a work of supererogation; for Francis de Cressingham was not only a scapegrace by nature, but a papist by profession; his mother (who survived his disastrous birth long enough to influence his religious principles) being issued of the noble house of Norfolk, and boasting the celebrated Cardinal Howard among her uncles.

Meanwhile the peace of Nimeguen restored tranquility to western Europe, and Captain de Cressingham to the Hall; and it was well for him that he escaped being drowned in sherries-sack by his kinsman, or smothered in kisses by the two girls, during the first twenty-four hours of his sojourn. Millicent was scarcely fourteen; yet Dr. Esdras was of opinion that the raptures of her welcome might have been moderated with advantage to all parties. He even ventured to express some such notion in the hearing of his patron and disciple Sir Giles; who swore in good round terms that he had no mind to be chaplain-ridden, and would foster no crop-eared puritan in his household, till the doctor was fain to retreat into the little study that served him for dormitory and all, leaving the young people to be as loving and frolicsome as they and the obstinate knight thought proper.

But however warm the welcome of the elder Cressingham, and however strenuous his opposition to the innovations of a meddling chaplain, there existed between himself and his kinsman a fertile and inextinguishable germ of discord. They had lived on easy terms in the relative position of benefactor, and protégé, guardian and ward; but, as man and man, the case was widely different. Frank was a blind and hotheaded royalist; while the loyalty of Sir Giles was somewhat refrigerated by the sacrifices he had been compelled to make to the improvidence and obstinacy of the House of Stuart. Frank was a courtier; Sir Giles a clown. But above all, the knight had formed, or, as he said, obtained an opinion that, by means of certain fines and recoveries, the residue of the Cressingham estates were fully redeemed from the original deed of entail; white Frank regarded the whole as his inalienable inheritance; and, dearly as he loved his two fair cousins, had no mind to be swaggered out of his birthright. A sovereign regnant is apt to look with a jealous eye upon his heir apparent, and still more upon the heir presumptive, or presumptuous, who advances unrecognised claims. The young captain had not been six weeks established at the Hall, before theological differences ran high between himself and the pragmatical Esdras; and the party designations of Whig and Tory, then in the first blush of their virulence. were soon fieroely bandied between the two cousins. The attempt to restore episcopacy in Scotland afforded an overflowing theme for those political squabbles, miscalled arguments; and while the heart of the young volunteer waxed hot within him to hear himself stigmatised as a vapouring boy, the nose of Sir Giles waxed hot without him on being upbraided as a recreant from the faith of his gallant ances-It soon became apparent to Milicent and Ursula, tors. that the sooner cousin Frank returned to Whitehall the more agreeable to cousin Giles. The young man was indebted to the testamentary dispositions of his uncle, Sir Lawrence, for a sufficient provision to supply the sword of a De Cressingham with new scabbards; and he now burst forth once more upon his perilous career, and was soon heard of, fighting with the great Sobieski against Tekeli and the Turks.

At this period, Milicent de Cressingham, now rapidly advancing towards womanhood, was often heard to interrupt her sister Ursula's labours in the wardrobe and still-room with expressions of joy that their cousin should be absent from England during so stormy a season of political strife; more particularly as the zeal and domestic influence of Dr. Esdras increased in proportion as the public influence of his party declined; while the sinister aspect of their father's affairs only tended to irritate his prejudices against the ascendant faction. And yet, considering how often young Mistress de Cressingham declared herself "rejoiced" by the rambling campaigns of "poor Frank," it was surprising how much her coquetry subsided and her gaiety declined during his absence. Instead of the fontange with its ribands of cherry-colour, Milicent's tresses were now confined under as simple a riding-hood as the starchest puritan of them all; and having laid aside the rhapsoches of Dryden and Nat Lee and

the mellifluous vagaries of Waller, she was oftentimes found seated in a favourite arbour of phyllyrea, looking out on the great canal, with a volume of the Pilgrim's Progress open upon her knee. Whither her thoughts were straying none could tell; perhaps they were lost among the knots of a new stomacher; perhaps at the siege of Vienna;—perhaps in the Slough of Despond!

It is needless to relate how slowly the monotonous years passed away at Cressingham Hall; or how many hogsheads of wormwood wine, or gallons of rosemary water attested the housewifely diligence of its younger mistress, when, to the amazement of their good father and the surprise of his moderately good chaplain, the elder, the fair Milicent, was moved to decline the suit of the Lord Keswycke; a worthy gentleman from the North, with the wisdom of fifty years on his brow, and the virtue of half as many annual thousand pounds in his pocket; and who appeared on the field, moreover, in a coach and six surpassing the splendour of the Duchess of Portsmouth's. The siege of Vienna and of the lady were raised together; and in the course of the same summer, after a submissive epistle claiming pardon of Sir Giles for past offences on the score of youthful intemperance, cousin Frank returned from the Danube; his handsome face garnished with a pair of mustachios that streamed on the troubled air like the sacred horse-tail of the prophet which he had recently assisted to capture.

The conquering hero came—and all dissensions were speedily forgotten in the enthusiasm of a stretch of heroism such as had not graced the annals of the House of Cressingham since the Crusades. The knight felt conscious that he could do no less than take by the hand a kinsman who had ventured to take the Turk by the beard,—closed weapon to weapon with a wild Pandour,—and trampled under foot the consecrated standard of Mahommed. Again and more warmly than ever he was welcomed at the Hall; and amid the flo-

rescent marvellousness of his recitals (attested by many an ugly gash, as well as by a complexion of terra di Sienna, emulating the right genuine Mocha on which he had been dieting) Milicent's eyes were seen to recover their sparkling lustre, and her riding-hood to assume something of a more courtly shaping. The clipped arbour was now deserted, or made to shelter a pair of turtle doves in lieu of the solitary But lo! before cousin Frank's complexion had. lost a shade of its Hungarian swarthiness under the less fervid skies of Britain, he and the old knight unluckily hit upon a matter of contestation far more stimulant to the wrath of both parties than either the test act, the orthodoxy of Dr. Sancroft, or the authenticity of the Rye-house plot. Francis de Cressingham ventured to demand the hand of his cousin Milicent in marriage; and Sir Giles scrupled not to inform him that he was a blockhead for his pains.

It was on a hot, sultry, cross-grained afternoon in August, the chaplain and the ladies had accepted the hint of the knight's loyal toast to retire to their devotions; and the host and the young colonel were lest tête-à-tête. On the table between them were flagons and flasks, and tall spider-legged rummers; with a dish of mellow jargonelles, over which buzzed a swarm of summer flies and a malignant wasp or so, at which Sir Giles sat fencing with his hunting couteau, till his nose grew as red as a love-apple, and his temper correspondently inflamed. After uttering divers pishes and pshaws, and other interjections to which Dr. Esdras and the recording angel might have found much to object, he looked down on his Spanish leather boots, and laid the blame on the twinges of a flying gout; and it was at this inauspicious moment, that Frank (who, having defied Kara Mustapha and all his hosts, made light of the peevish mood of a country cousin), with most audacious self-conceit, proceeded to tender his proposals for the hand of his cousin!—the old man winced grievously; but he no longer ascribed his grimaces to any physical ailment.

"Look ye here, Colonel Francis de Cressingham," cried be, striving to subdue his rising choler, but pushing forward the flagons of Rhenish till they chimed together like an alarum, "I esteem you well as a kinsman, as my father's ward, as the orphan of a gallant man, and so forth; but if you fancy that a girl of mine shall ever camp in the tents of Belial;--if you suppose that Milly de Cressingham has been reared to tramp at the heels of your troop, starch your ruffles six days o' the week, and clear accounts with her conscience by half an hour's whisper in the ear of some confounded jesuit of a confessor on Saturday night,-i'faith you are mistaken, colonel!-plaguily mistaken,-and no thanks to you for the The wench will carry with her to some honest blunder. man's bosom half of my lands here pinned to her sleeve, without needing to graft herself and them on the withered branch of her family stock."

Frank de Cressingham's reply was given in a tone worthy the fiercest pacha whose scimetar he had seen waving on the walls of Buda! He swore that, however beneath the notice of a needy knight baronet, he might obtain richer and nobler wives than Mistress Milicent of the Hall, any day of the year; boasted his favour both with the king and the duke; denounced his kinsman as obnoxious to the court; nay, even threatened him with the growing ascendancy of popish in-The old man's rejoinders grew louder and hotter, fluence. as he recognised the truth of Frank's allusions to his falling fortunes; and it was well, perhaps, that the dormitory or library of the good doctor was sufficiently near at hand, and his slumbers or studies sufficiently light, to admit of his being roused by the fray. Dr. Esdras rushed into the eating hall to separate the disputants, just as the hard argument of a heavy parcel-gilt goblet (an heir loom from their common grandsire) was flung at the head of the hero of the Danube!

It needed not long for Colonel Frank to cause his horse to be saddled for instant departure; yet brief as the period was between his offence and flight, he found leisure for a moment's

interview with the lovely origin of both. They met, as usual, in the evergreen arbour; where Frank, with the foam still moist on his lip, and the sparkle of rage still bright in his eye, mingled his blessings on herself with curses on her father; implored,-besought,-nay, almost compelled her to fly with him; retraced their long years of tenderness; pictured their still longer years of future separation; till Milicent grew cold and pale as a marble statue in his arms, and the tears rolled down her unconscious cheeks as she listened. But Frank de Cressingham, though brave as a soldier and glowing as a lover, was not endowed with a right generous spirit of humanity; and in the improvidence of his selfishness, he now ventured to put forth an argument fatal to his cause:-he told her that the ruin of her father's house was accomplished; and entreated her to fly with him from its desolation. He did not perceive with what thrice holy sanctity he was investing the duty of a daughter!

Assuming a dignity such as had never before elevated her graceful person, Milicent instantly extricated herself from his embraces, and bade him adieu for ever. A few minutes afterwards the colonel and his horse were enveloped with clouds of dust on their road back to Whitehall; and Milly was weeping at the old man's feet. Her father had been insulted; and in the perpetrator of such an offence she no longer recognised a lover. She implored the forgiveness of her parent,—the forgiveness of Heaven,—for that one short moment of rebellion; and poor Ursula de Cressingham had a hard task in soothing the ire of the old knight and the tears of her sister.

But the love that has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength is not to be cast away in an hour, however grievous the backslidings of its object. The indignant daughter wavered not for a moment in her determination, nor was there one tear of repentance among the floods with which she bathed the green boughs of the arbour after Cressingham's departure; but she soon grew more than ever attached to the spot;—coming thither in the first place to sigh over her lover's offences;—in the next to bewail his departure with Lord Dartmouth's expedition to Tangier;—and lastly, to commune with her own prudence touching her father's entreaties that she would once more give ear to Lord Keswycke's tender overtures.

The position of poor old Sir Giles was now, indeed, every way deplorable. His health had long been breaking. Early hardships, endured during the civil wars, had prematurely bowed his frame;—the consciousness of apostasy, combined with the mortification of beholding the cause he had embraced on the death of his father gradually sink into nothingness, only augmented the mischief; -while the position of public affairs, the death of Russell and Sidney, and the flagrant malpractices of Jeffries, filled him with consternation. Every day some harsh warning was breathed into the old man's ears; every day the denunciations of his young cousin recurred to his memory; and each retrogressive step taken by the protestant party seemed to augment the triumph of Francis and his own degradation. All these things were solemnly pointed out by old Esdras to the attention of Milicent and her sister. He assured them that their father's injudicious zeal had attracted the fatal notice of the lord chief justice; that the name of Sir Giles de Cressingham was entered in Jeffries' black list; and that nothing less than the protection of a son-in-law, rich and influential as the Lord Keswycke, would secure the old knight from impeachment and the Tower. The two girls, who were no strangers to their father's imprudence of speech and action, trembled while they listened!-And on the very evening of the chaplain's argumentation, Lord Keswycke arrived anew at the Hall!

But, having formerly put to the proof the fair Milicent's inaccessibility to the ordinary temptations of her sex, he this time left the coach and six at Keswycke Moat, and pursued his courtship in the simplest and most straightforward manner. Perhaps his lordship was conscious of having no extrinsic advantages to match with the heroic vein; for he was a tall, stern, hard-favoured ungainly man, wanting only a Geneva skull-cap and cloak to look the perfect puritan. His voice was tuneless-his manner harsh-his matter dry-his demeanour cold; and but that, on the week succeeding his arrival, the old knight her father was subpænaed to appear before Jeffries as a witness on one of those deadly trials manufactured to fill out the purposes of his commission, it is probable that Milicent might have been unable to control her repugnance sufficiently to give him her hand. But after due self-interrogation, and terror-struck by the approaching danger, she finally consented to become Lady Keswycke in time to justify her lord in calling together his retainers, and accompanying his venerable father-in-law to the tribunal in the west: - and when soon afterwards Sir Giles was dismissed with honour from the prosecution, it was rumoured in the court and city that his preservation had cost a sum of five thousand pounds to Milicent's bridegroom. Whole years of tenderness and devotion would not have impressed the heart of his young wife so strongly as that one week of self-sacrifice and generosity!--How could she do otherwise than venerate the hand which had preserved the life of her father.

Lord Keswycke, meanwhile, expressed a decided objection to the Cressingham family prolonging their residence at the old hall. The evil spirit of the new reign was already abroad. Faggots were heard crackling on every side as in the bloody days of Mary, while the martyrdom of Mrs. Gaunt and the Lady Lisle attested that they were not kindled in vain; nay, it was a favourite sport with James to entertain his foreign ambassadors with vaunting narratives of what he facetiously termed the "Campaign of Jeffries!" The revocation of the edict of Nantes had cut off even the hope of a refuge in France; and Milicent, while she contemplated the perils and dangers of her infirm parent, offered up fervent thanksgivings to heaven for having afforded the means of securing him

a stronghold against his enemics, a shelter for his old age. With her father and her sister as her inmates, her dreaded residence at Keswycke Moat lost all or half its terrors. But though many person's averred that the stern bridegroom was mainly anxious to remove her from a spot pointed out by Esdras as replete with associations inimical to the growth of wedded love, the world was, as usual, mistaken. However little calculated to shine at Whitehall, or vie with the attractions of the cavalier cousin's sweeping plume and mustachios, Keswycke was a man of unswerving honour; nor would have raised to his bosom a wife whose virtue he deemed it necessary to fence round with such fierce guardianship. Milicent might have loitered out the remainder of her days in the phyllyrea bosquet, without exciting any alarm in her husband beyond that of her eatching the ague from the malaria of the stagnant canal.

And well did the lovely bride repay this honest confidence in her prudence. In ceasing to be a child, Milicent had put away childish things. Her lover's egotism, her father's danger, her husband's excellence, had sobered her fancy and strengthened her character. Like "the gentle lady wedded to the Moor," she beheld her husband's image in his mind, -or rather had ceased to notice the uncomeliness of his aspect;---but, apprehending the holy value of the name of wife, and reverencing the mighty importance of its duties, she felt that she had a part to play in the sight of man and the sight of God; and that, having fallen upon a period of national trouble, it was incumbent on her to meet the tumult with redoubled firmness, even as the mountain shrubs root themselves the stronger for the tempest. Lord Keswycke, if he did not yet touch her heart, already commanded her respect. He was neither gracious nor graceful; but his every word was bright with meaning-his every action with nobleness. She looked up to his intellectual superiority as to the majesty of the firmament over her head, which, transparent as it is, no eye can search or measure; and grew more

important in her own eyes, on finding herself valued and approved by a being of such eminent endowments. She knew (for Keswycke was not the man to bestow his name on one he deemed unworthy his utmost confidence), that it was to him the protestant party looked for furtherance and protection against the innovations of a despotic king and corrupt ministry. She knew that he afforded the connecting link between the Court of the Hague and the people of Britain; that it needed but the uplifting of his hand for Mary of Orange to appear on her native shores, and assume a throne forfeited by her father's blind and bigoted defiance of its laws and constitution. She knew that on the acquittal of the bishops at their trial at Westminster, it was Keswycke's name that was shouted loudest by the rejoicing populace; that it was his influence which upheld the opposition of the University of Oxford to the imperious mandates of the king-that the chief men of the city—the chief prelates—the chief jurists—were in constant and confidential communication with Keswycke Moat. in spite of all this, Milicent feared nothing for his safety; for she also knew the purity of his life, the steadiness of his judgment, and the total absence of worldly or interested motives from his proceedings. She saw that his measures were taken for conscience sake; that he was above the influence of ambition, beyond the reach of venal calculations—the diligent servant of God, the vigilant master of his own passions—and believed him secure as the ark of the covenant from the touch of a lawless sovereign. It was not with her liege lord as with her rash and vacillating father. Keswycke could have said or done or thought no weak or evil thing; and Milicent was as proud of the greatness of her husband's mind as many women would have been of the mightiness of his estate and condition. Once or twice it was insinuated to her by old Sir Giles, now verging on his dotage, that Francis de Cressingham (who was well known as an accredited emissary between the courts of James and of the Vatican, or rather as the officious agent between Father Petre, the royal confessor,

and his own uncle, Cardinal Howard), had pointed out the popular influence of Lord Keswycke as a matter of peril and terror to the weak minds of James and his queen; and that a system of espionage was accordingly instituted in the environs of Keswycke Moat. Yet still Milicent feared nothing. Whenever Ursula was moved to the acknowledgment of her apprehensions, her sister did but incite her to join more fervently in prayer for their mutual consolation, and more actively in study for the engrossment of their faculties, lest she should be induced into the frailty of weak-heartedness in her lord's behalf.

"There is a mighty duty in his hand," said she, as they walked side by side along the stately terrace of the old castle, "the fate of nations is committed to his charge—the welfare of millions—the destinies of interminable posterity. I then,—even I,—by my weak terrors molest my husband in his most responsible career, or add one thorn to the anxieties of his arduous undertakings ?-No, no! Ursula:-if I am weak, pray that I may be strengthened; if perplexed, pray that my paths may be made straight; -but hazard not one word to me of my husband's danger, lest I grow faint in my good intent. Talk to me of other things. The earth with its flowers, which is so bright around us; the heavens with their stars, which are so bright above ;- futurity with its hopes, brighter, yea! a thousand-fold brighter, beyond! -Let us talk of these things, Ursula; nor linger one sentence longer amid the political dissensions of a misgoverned nation."

So stedfast was Milicent in this prudent and virtuous resolve, that throughout the perils which ensued, although her frame wasted to a shadow and her voice grew even as a whisper for very wretchedness, she breathed not a word of fear or misgiving.

From the momentous period of the landing of William, she suffered no hour of the twenty-four—no moment of the hour—to remain unoccupied; for now, for the first time

since her marriage, she was withdrawn from her husband's company. Lord Keswycke had hastened, by a pre-appointment with the Lord Churchill and the Duke of Grafton, to join the protestant prince at Axminster; -and even at the moment of bidding him farewell, Milicent had the noble fortitude to say "God speed him!" without embittering their parting embrace by a single tear. She looked upon him as a nuncio of Heaven, going forth to fulfil his master's work; nor was it till after his departure, after the old gates of the Moat had actually closed upon the last straggler of his train, that she fell down on the threshold in a deep swoon, struggling for five hours between death and life, while the doting old knight tore his grey hair by her bedside, and Ursula sat chafing her cold hands without hope of her recovery. Her disorder arose, however, from weakness of body, not weakness of mind. Her soul was worthy of her husband and his cause; and, in the course of a day or two, she was enabled to rise and go into her oratory, and pray with all her spirit for a blessing on the absent one.--" He saved my father;-he is about to save my country: --- strengthen him, O Lord God, with thy mighty power, and prosper his undertaking!" said Milicent; and, in the sight of Heaven at least, she had no need to check the bitterness of her agony.

Her prayers were heard !—The hour of danger passed away; but although Milicent knew him to be standing at the king's right hand at Westminster, she had prudence to refrain from joining her husband in the capital, or from interceding for a short visit to the Moat, lest she should intercept, however slightly, the fulfilment of his public duties. Mighty indeed had been the strife within her soul, and mighty the anguish of her heart, during the political conflict of that bloodless revolution. But still more mighty was her reward when, summoned by her lord to their new residence at court, she heard his name shouted by the grateful populace as he approached; and, amid the tears that sprung into her eyes, and which she was no longer compelled to repress, hailed for

the first time the countenance she loved brightened by the sunshine of perfect contentment!—The destinies of his country were secured, and Milicent was again in his arms!

It was amid the tumult of this unhoped-for triumph, that Lady Keswycke and her lord were summoned to receive the old man her father's dying benediction; and it was an affecting thing to hear the aged knight, reversing the law of nature, render thanks to his child that she had solaced him, and supported him, and been a stay to his feeble footsteps. He bequeathed his daughter Ursula to the guardianship of his high-minded son-in-law as to that of a second Providence; and then, like Simeon, was ready to "depart in peace, now that his eyes had seen the salvation of the Lord:" leaving it to his daughters, to carry back the remains of their old father to the abode of his ancestors,—where he had hoped to return and find a tranquil home, and where it was their pious. duty to lay his grey head in the grave.

Some years had now elapsed since they quitted Cressingham. The hall had grown damp and dark and gloomy, even to the uttermost desolation; while the gardens, like every spot recommitted to the hand of nature, were only the more beautiful in proportion to their abandonment. The trimmed shrubs had shot forth into a natural shape; the flowers, unchecked and unpruned, had sprung up as in a wilderness of blossom; song-birds had built unheeded on every side; and even the wild bees now deposited their treasures in the clefts of its solitary trees. As the sisters bent their steps on the evening of their arrival across the weedy gravel, or ascended the mossy stone steps of the terrace-startled in their turn by the wood-pigeons they scared from their nests, Ursula vainly attempted to beguile her sister from the path leading to the phyllyrea bower. "Nay, let us not bend our steps thitherward," faltered she at length, fancying that the spot would present a painful recollection in the mind of Lady Keswicke.

"And wherefore not?" answered Milicent, in her own sweet stedfast voice, turning upon her a countenance that



their father's recent death had stripped of its natural bloom. " It is my place of triumph, Ursula !-- the spot where I was tempted-the spot where I was sustained against temptation. But for that green arbour and its scene of parting, I had followed my youth's vain fancy, and never been blest as the wedded wife of the noblest of mankind; had never enjoyed the triumph of being dearest of all to one whose love extends to the meanest of his fellow-creatures :-- the glory of holding a part in that mind to which the nations of the earth turn for guidance and instruction:—the holy joy of knowing myself a first object in those prayers betwixt which and Heaven no wild or worldly object interposeth! My sister-my dear sister,-look around-look at these shapeless walls of verdure, these decaying benches, this weed-entangled ground under our feet; -and then thank Heaven for me that they were made to bear witness to my eternal separation from one who would have had me desert my father in his falling fortunes!"

The influence of a woman thus gifted was necessarily great at the sober court of the new queen; where, sorely against her will and solely in obedience to her husband, Lady Keswycke had undertaken the post of Lady of the Bedchamber. Resigning the tranquil seclusion of Keswycke Most for the stir and pageantry of Hampton Court-and elbowed in the antechamber of the palace of St. James's, instead of presiding over the restoration of the Cressingham estates, -Milicent, over whom, from her youth upward, the word duty possessed a paramount authority, renounced without repining those simple habits which her country breeding rendered second nature. The buoyancy of her youthful gaiety had long been subdued into the matron dignity of a wife; but an innocent joyousness of spirit still sparkled in her eyes whenever Keswycke's weight in the council, or arguments in the House, or favour with all classes of the realm, were commended in her hearing. It was the custom of Mary to sit among the ladies of her court, engaged in needlework, or

other exercises which could be made available to benevolent purposes; and among these the Lady Keswycke was the fairest, and most graceful, and most favoured. Her prudence, her dignified humility, as well as her enthusiasm in the cause sanctioned by a father and a husband, rendered her an invaluable companion to her majesty; and when, sixty months afterwards, the king departed on his Irish expedition, it was in the bosom of her friend (her friend—not favourite) that the daughter of James—the wife of William—deposited her two-fold sorrow. And well indeed could Milicent appreciate their influence; and earnestly did she rejoice that the necessity of Keswycke's presence in the council prevented him from following the fortunes of his royal master. He had been appointed by the king, with seven other statesmen, to exercise a direct influence over the measures of the Queen; and his position, as the husband of her favourite friend, having invested him in the royal mind with a degree of interest beyond that of the Lords Carmarthen and Nottingham, his time was soon wholly engrossed by hurried journeys between Windsor and Whitehall.

But the crisis of Milicent's destiny was now at hand. One morning, some days after the arrival of intelligence of the battle of the Boyne, Ursula de Cressingham burst, with frantic gestures and quivering lips, into the cabinet of his lady, her sister.

- "Weep with me," cried she; "weep with me: our father's house is dishonoured! Frank—our cousin Frank—our playmate—the hand-in-hand companion of our child-hood—is a prisoner; ay, and likely to perish by an ignominious death!"
- "The clemency of the king is well known," said Milicent, coldly: "nor is it the custom of modern warfare to injure an honourable captive."
- "Alas, alas!" cried Ursula, "can I, dare I, tell you all and move you in his behalf?—Shall I avow the weakness of my heart?—Yes! I love him, Milly—love him with all the fer-

vour of womanly attachment!—While the eyes of our cousin Francis were riveted on you, mine saw nothing on this earth besides himself. Judge, therefore, Milicent, my dearest sister, judge of my feelings on learning that a great victory has blessed our protestant hosts; and that the papers of the Lord Tirconnell having fallen into the hands of the victors, a horrible plot has been discovered for the assassination of the king's majesty. Sister,—it is rumoured that a De Cressingham was the enemy to whom was delegated the perpetration of the crime."

- "Great Heaven!" exclaimed Milicent, "I thank thee that my father did not live to see this day."
 - "He is innocent!-our cousin is innocent!" cried Ursula.
- "Surely it is guilt enough to be accessible to the charge of so heinous an enormity," said Lady Keswycke, shuddering with horror.
- "And has your heart no memory?" ejaculated Ursula: "do you recollect nothing of your childish endearments,—your youthful friendships?—The same blood flows in the breast of Francis that animated our father's; would you see it outpoured on a scaffold?—Would you hear the name of our forefathers profaned by the common voice as that of a traitor and a malefactor?—Your influence is great with your lord. Plead with him, plead with him, and save our kinsman from this disgraceful end."

"Leave me," said the lady, bestowing a warm sisterly embrace upon the trembling Ursula; "I have need to ponder upon these things."

Milicent was seated at her tiring mirror when her sister burst into her chamber;—and there she still sat,—perplexed by that stir of pulse which, however great the influence of female prudence or christian principle, is apt to wake anew on mention of the lover of our youth. The recollection of those early days was as a far-off vision; connected with her mother's endearments, her father's pride in her well-doing; with holy memories of the dead, with holy reliance on the

living. It was strange, she thought, that her sister's partiality should have escaped her observation. Was it vanity that had blinded her eyes?—Had ber persuasion of her cousin Frank's exclusive devotion to herself rendered her insensible to the possibility of his becoming an object of attachment to another?—How came it, too, that Francis should have overlooked the lighter and brighter graces of her young sister, when connected with this flattering partiality?—Milicent was still but five-and-twenty years of age; and in spite of all her prudence, an involuntary glance bent itself on her tiring glass for a reply to the question!

That Francis was really guilty of the offence laid to his charge did not for a moment occupy her fears. A De Cressingham turn assassin?—No, no, Frank might have subjected himself to suspicion—but to become a deliberate murderer?—Impossible?—She knew him to be deeply pledged to the fugitive king,—the advocate and upholder of his most obnoxious measures; and he had probably been induced into some outrage, whereby still deadlier suspicious became attached to his designs.

What was to be done?—The court was at Hampton; and Keswycke had but an hour before departed on state business for an audience with the queen. Should she despatch an express to him, imploring his intercession?—Alas! how hard the task to commence a letter to the lofty Keswycke with an allusion to her girlish weakness, with the narrative of a love tale!-But there was no time for deliberation; and in the midst of her perplexities, Ursula claimed admittance, and placing the Gazette in her hand, pointed out to her horrorstruck eyes, the ancient name of their house pointed out in large capitals to the detestation of the kingdom!-Yes, all was too true. Among the papers left by King James on his precipitate flight from Dublin, was a letter (addressed to the queen at St. Germains) detailing a plan of assassination, whereby Sir Francis De Cressingham had undertaken to cut off his royal son-in-law!

"This is no business for Keswycke's interference," cried Milicent, drawing on her hood. "For twenty cousins or twenty worlds I would not peril his noble name by entanglement in so vile a thing;—but the queen loves me—I will try my own influence over her heart. God has been merciful to her in sparing the lives of her father and husband in this unnatural conflict; let her show mercy in return."

When the Lady Keswycke's coach entered the quadrangle of the palace at Hampton, all appeared in confusion. Courtiers were thronging in on every side to tender loyal congratulations to her majesty, who was still occupied with her cabinet council;—but on the announcement of a lady of the bedchamber, respectful way was made; and Milicent was able to take her seat nearest the door of the audience chamber, and await as patiently as she might the coming forth of the queen. No one approached her. The name of Cressingham seemed to have communicated some fatal infection to Lord Keswycke's wife. The courtiers and ladies of the household stood in groups afar off, smiling and sneering and admiring how soon the rumour of her family shame had brought the favourite of the queen to be a waiter in antechambers!——

But Milicent saw them not—heard them not—heeded them not!—She had drawn her hood closer over her face. Her thoughts were far away in the dimness of years; her heart was back again in the green arbour.—Again she seemed to see the fiery youth at her feet; again she seemed to shudder and recoil as he denounced her father to be a ruined man, and invited her to forsake him in his helplessness. But for that spot and that hour, she might now have been the wife of a convicted traitor and malefactor!—Had she not cause for thankfulness to the Almighty Being, by whom her determination had been inspired?—

But Milicent's prudence was about to encounter a new ordeal. On entering the presence, to which she was now hastily summoned, she discovered that she had to confront not only the searching gaze of her royal mistress, but the wondering looks of her husband, and the somewhat supernilious smile of Bishop Burnet, who stood at the queen's right hand. Milicent's footsteps trembled for the first time on approaching an earthly throne; but after kissing the hand graciously extended towards her, she unhesitatingly kneeled down, and implored in simple terms the queen's clemency for her cousin, Sir Francis De Cressingham.

Never before had Lady Keswycke perceived the angry blood rise to the brow of her royal patroness! Mary, who resented not this bold application as a queen, but as a wife, hastily demanded, while her eyes sparkled with anger, whether the Lady Keswycke, in hazarding so audacious a supplication, could be aware of the crime of which that person stood accused?

Milicent clasped her hands; but said not a word in reply. "Let me hear no more of this," said her majesty, seating herself beside the council table with an air of dignity she was rarely seen to assume, "or I may be tempted to inquize to what strange influence over the wife of Lord Keswycke, the traitor Cressingham is indebted for this eager intercession!"

Even this harsh taunt did not divert the lady from her purpose.

"Suffer me, madam, to forestal the question," said she, striving to assume a composed demeanour:—and without rising from her kneeling position, and regardless of the stern gaze fixed by Keswycke and the queen upon her face, she proceeded to relate all; her cousin's hereditary dewotion to the house of Stuart,—his intemperance of spirit,—his betrothment to herself,—his interest in the heart of her only sister.

Mary bent a significant look towards Lord Keswycke, who was visibly affected by the narration. "Rise!" said he, raising Milicent from her knees with an air of inexpressible dignity; "rise, my beloved wife, nor humble yourself further for this thing. Your kinsman is beyond reach of the mercy or the vengeance of kings. A price was set upon his head; and being overtaken, Francis De Cressingham perished in the ignoble scuffle of capture. See, madam," said he, replying with proud consciousness to the glance of the queen, "My Milicent blenches not!—Your majesty will now graciously admit that her petition arose not from any unworthy predilection. Blessed is the husband whose heart, in spite of insinuation—in spite of prejudice—in spite of every sinister appearance—is anchored in the unswerving prudence of a virtuous wife!"

It was a proud moment for Lady Keswycke. Mary,—generously retracting her momentary mistrust,—caused the doors of the presence-chamber to be thrown open and walked forth into the gallery betwixt herself and her lord.

"For once, my lord, the text is at fault!" whispered the queen to Bishop Burnet, as she saw her two friends depart together in undiminished love and confidence:—"The children of this world are not always wiser in their generation than the children of light!"

THE BRIGHTON COACH.

BY THEODORE HOOK.

A friend, on whose veracity I can perfectly rely, told me the following story; whether a repetition of it may interest a reader I cannot say; but I will hazard the experiment.

I was once (said my friend) placed in a situation of peculiar embarrassment; the event made a strong impression on me at the time—an impression, indeed, which has lasted ever since.

Those who know as well as I do, and have known, as long as I have known, that once muddy, shabby, dirty, fishing-town on the Sussex coast, which has grown, under the smiles and patronage of our late beloved king, into splendour and opulence, called Brighton, will be aware that there run to it and from it, divers and sundry most admirable public conveyances in the shape of stage coaches; that the rapid improvements in that sort of travelling have, during late years, interfered with, and greatly injured the trade of posting; and that people of the first respectability think it no shame to pack themselves up in a Brighton coach, and step out of it at Charing-cross exactly five hours after they have stepped into it, in Castle-square.

The gallant gay Stevenson, with his prancing greys under perfect command, used to attract a crowd to see him start; and now, although he poor fellow, is gone that journey whence no traveller returns, Goodman still survives, and the "Times" still flourishes; in that, is the principal scene of my embarrassment laid; and to that admirable, neat, and expeditious equipage must l endeavour to attract your attention for some ten minutes.

It was one day in the autumn of 1829, just as the Pavilion clock was striking three, that I stepped into Mr. Goodman's coach. In it, I found already a thin stripling enveloped in a fur pelisse, the only distinguished mark of whose sex was a tuft of mustachio on his upper lip. He wore a travelling-cap on his head girt with a golden band, and eyed me and his other fellow-traveller as though we had been of a different race of beings from himself.

That other fellow-traveller I took to be a small attorney. He was habited in a drab great coat, which matched his round, fat face in colour; his hair, too, was drab, and his hat was drab; his features were those of a young pig; and his recreation through the day was sucking barley-sugar, to which he perpetually kept helping himself from a neat, white paper parcel of the luscious commodity, which he had placed in the pocket of the coach window.

There was one other passenger to take up, and I began wondering what it would be like, and whether it would be male or female, old or young, handsome or ugly, when my speculations were speedily terminated by the arrival of an extremely delicate pretty woman, attended by her maid. The lady was dressed in the extreme of plainness, and yielded the palm of gaiety to her soubrette, who mounted by the side of Mr. Goodman, at the moment that her mistress placed herself next my pig-faced friend and opposite to me.

It does not require half a second of time to see and know and understand what sort of woman it is who is thus brought in juxta-position with one. The turn of her mind may be ascertained by the way she seats herself in her corner; her disposition, by the look she gives to her companions; and her character—but perhaps that may require a minute or two more.

The lady in question cast a hasty glance round her, merely,

as it should seem, to ascertain if she were personally acquainted with any of her companions. She evidently was not; and her eyes sank from the inquiring gaze round the party upon a black silk bag which lay on her lap. She was about four or five-and-twenty; her eyes were blue and hair fair; it hung carelessly over her forehead, and the whole of her costume gave evidence of a want of attention to what is called "setting one's self off to the best advantage." She was tall—thin—pale; and there was a sweet expression in her countenance which I shall never forget; it was mild and gentle, and seemed to be formed to its plaintive cast by suffering—and yet why should one so lovely, be unhappy?

As the clock struck, we started. The sudden turn of the team round the corner of North-street and Church-street brought a flush of colour into her checks; she was conscious of the glow which I was watching; she seemed ashamed of her own timidity. She looked up to see if she was observed; she saw she was, and looked down again.

All this happened in the first hundred and seventy yards of a journey of fifty-two miles and a half.

My pig-faced friend, who sucked his berley-sugar sonorously, paid little attention to any body, or anything, except himself; and, in pursuance of that amiable tenderness, pulled up the window at his side. The lady, like the beau in the fur coat, laid her delicate head back in the corner of the coach, and slept, or seemed to sleep.

The horror I felt lest my pig-faced friend should consider it necessary to join in any conversation which I might venture to originate with my unknown beauty opposite, kept me quiet; and I "ever and anon" looked arxionsly towards his vacant features, in hopes to see the two grey unmeaning things which served him for eyes, closed in a sweet and satisfactory slumber. But no; although he spoke not, and, if one may judge by countenances, thought not, still he kept awake, and ready, as it should seem, to join in a conversation which he had not courage to begin.

And so we travelled on, and not one syllable was exchanged until we reached Crawley. There my heart was much relieved. At Hands-cross we had dropped the cornet with the tufts; horses were ready to convey him to some man's house to dinner; and, when we were quitting Crawley, I saw my excellent demolisher of barley-sugar mount a regular Sussex buggy, and export himself to some town or village out of the line of our road.

I here made a small effort at ice-breaking with my delicate companion, who consorted with her maid at one end of the room, while I with one or two more sensualists from the outside, was refreshing myself with some cold fowl and salad. I ventured to ask her whether she would allow me to offer her some wine and water. Hang it, thought I, if we stand upon gentility in a stage coach journey, smart as the things are, we shall never part sociably. She seemed somewhat of the same opinion, for she smiled. I shall never forget it: it seemed on her placid countenance like sunshine amidst showers—she accepted my proffered draught.

"I rather think," said I, "we shall travel alone for the rest of the journey—our communicative friends have left us."

She made no answer; but from the sort of expression which passed over her features, I was very sorry I had made the remark. I was in the greatest possible alarm lest she should require the presence of her maid to play propriety; but no, she had no such notion.

A summons from Mr. Goodman soon put the party in motion, and in a few minutes we were again on our journey—the dear interesting creature and myself tête-à-tête.

- "Have you been long at Brighton?" said I.
- "Some time," replied the lady—" some months, indeed." Here came a pause.
 - "You reside in London, I presume?" said I.
- "In the neighbourhood;" replied the lady; at the same time drawing off the glove of her left hand (which, by the

way, was as white as snow), to smooth one of her eyebrows, as it appeared by what she actually did with it, but, as I thought, to exhibit to my sight, the golden badge of union which encircled its third finger.

- "And," said I, "have you been living alone at Brighton so long?"
- "Oh, no!" said the stranger; "my husband has only left me during the last few weeks, and has now summoned me home, being unable to rejoin me on the coast."

"Happy man!" said I, "to expect such a wife."

Now, there did not seem much in this common-place bit of folly, for I meant it for little else than jest, to summon up a thousand feelings, and excite a thousand passions—to raise a storm, and cause a flood of tears. But so it was—my companion held down her head to conceal her grief, and the big drops fell from her beautiful eyes.

- "Good God!" said I, "have I said anything to induce this emotion?—what have I done?—forgive me—believe me, if I have erred, it has been unintentionally—I—"
- "Don't speak to me," said the sufferer—"it is not your fault—you are forgiven—my heart is full, very full—and a word that touches the chord which vibrates to its very centre sadly affects me—pray—pray, let go my hand—and believe me I am not angry with you—I am to blame."
- "But," said I—not implicitly obeying the injunction about letting go her hand,—because what harm can holding a hand do?—"you must be more explicit before I can be satisfied with forgiveness—you have occasioned an interest which I cannot control, you have excited feelings which I cannot subdue—I am sure you are unhappy, and that I have referred to something which——"
- "Pray, pray ask me nothing," said my agitated companion; "I have betrayed myself—but Lam sure, quite sure," added she—and I do think I felt a sort of gentle pressure of my hand at the moment—"that you will not take advantage of a weakness of which I ought to be ashamed."

"You may rely upon me," said I, "that, so far as you may choose to trust me, you are safe; and you may believe, that any anxiety I may express to know more of circumstances which (whatever they are) so deeply affect you, arises from an interest which you had excited even before you spoke."

"What would you think of a woman," said she, "who should open her heart to a stranger? or, what sympathy could sorrows excite, which might be told by her after an hour's acquaintance? No, no; let me remain unknown to you, as I am. Let us talk on ordinary topics, and let us part friends—but not to meet again."

Not much in the habit of making conquest, and not being of that particular "shape and make" to be fallen in love with, at first sight, I confess this appeal seemed extraordinary. It was clear, from whatever cause arising I could not pretend to divine, that I had somehow prepossessed my companion in my favour; and certainly, if anything in the world could have induced me to resolve to meet this interesting creature again and again, it was her expressed desire that such a thing should not occur. I wonder if she anticipated the effect of her prohibition when she announced it!

"Friends!" said I, "why should we not part friends? Why should we not live friends? Let me implore you, tell me more of yourself—that is all I ask."

"Good God!" said she, raising her blue eyes towards Heaven, "is it possible that my pride and spirit should be so broken, so worked upon, that I could consent to admit of such a conversation with a stranger? How strangely do events operate upon the human mind!"

"Gentle spirits should be gently treated," said I. "I fear some rude hand has broken in upon the rest that beings like you should enjoy?"

"Oh," said she, "if I could tell you—and I believe I must—to justify myself for conduct which must appear to you so wild, so extraordinary, so unbecoming—oh, why, why did those people leave us together?"

I said nothing to this, because I could not exactly guess why they did; but that they had done so, I confess, I did not so much regret as my companion said she did.

"If my poor mother could look from heaven," said she, "and see me degraded as I am, what would she think of all the love and care expended upon me in my infancy and youth?"

This last touch was rather wounding to my vanity; because, although the lady might consider herself somewhat let down in the world by travelling in a stage-coach, I thought it a little uncivil to refer to the circumstance while I was her fellow-passenger.

"If," said I, "you will so far trust me as to confide your sorrows to me, I pledge myself to secresy, and even to pursue any course which you may suggest for relieving them."

"My story is brief," said my companion; "promise me not to refer to it at any future period during my life—that is, if we should ever meet after to-day, and I will trust you."

Here the pressure of the hand was unequivocal; and by a corresponding, yet perhaps more fervent token, I sealed the compact between us.

"I am the daughter," said she, "of a general officer, whe with my exemplary mother resided chiefly in Somersetshire. The cares and attention of my parents were affectionately devoted to the education and improvement of their only child, and I became, as they have a thousand times said, the blessing of their deckining years. I was scarcely seventeen when I lost my father, and his death produced not only a change of circumstances in our family, but a change of residence. My mether and myself removed to Bath. There we resided until we were induced to visit the Continent, where—I am ashamed to go on—a nobleman became my avowed admirer, and made me an offer of marriage. His rank was exalted, his fortune large; but I could not love him: was I wrong in refusing to marry him?"

"Assuredly not," said I, amazed at the animation which sparkled in eyes that lately flowed with tears, while she referred to the proper feeling and spirit she had exhibited in refusing a man she could not love.

"That refusal," continued the lady, "my poor mother could not forgive; she never did forgive it, and I believe that her anger is still over me, for what I have since suffered seems like a curse. My mother's disapprobation of my refusal of this desirable match had a complicated origin. She believed, and rightly too, that I discarded her favourite, not only upon the negative feeling of indifference or dislike towards him, but because I secretly preferred another. She was right—"

"And you ---"

"Stay," interrupted she—"bear me out—as I have begun, you shall know all. I did love another, a being all candour, openness, honour, and principle; talented, accomplished, gay, full of feeling, and generous to a fault. His name my mother would not hear me mention. She expelled him our house, excluded him from my society. What then?—trick and evasion on my part supplanted obedience and sincerity. The house of a friend afforded opportunities for our meeting, which my own denied—my youthful spirit could not bear restraint—we eloped and were married."

"And thus you secured your happiness," said I.

"Happiness!" said my companion; and never shall I lerget the expression of bitterness, sorrow, and remorse which animated her countenance as she prenounced the word. "Misery—misery beyond redemption! My mother died two years after my ill-fated union with the man of my choice; and died without forgiving me my sad error. 'No,' said my angry parent; 'she has chosen her course and must follow it, and when I am in my cold grave she will repent, and I hope be forgiven.'"

"But how were your prospects of happiness blighted?" said I.



"Ah!" said my companion, "there is the point—there is the story which I dare not tell. Can I betray my husband? Can I accuse him? Can I commit him to a stranger?"

"Being to a stranger," said I, "and one who, according to your own commands, is likely to remain a stranger to him always, you surely may."

"Then hear me," said the lady: "we had scarcely been married three years when, by some fatality to me wholly unaccountable, he became infatuated by a woman—woman I must call her—who led him into gaieties without his wife; who, fascinated by his agreeable qualities, became the monarch of his affections, the controller of his actions, and who, not satisfied with others attracting him from his home and all its ties, excited in his breast the fiercest jealousy against me."

"Shocking!" said I; and I thought so as I looked at the bewitching creature; not but that I must confess I did not see the entire impossibility of the existence of causes for her husband's apprehension, considering the confidential manner in which she communicated all her sorrows to me.

"Treatment the most barbarous followed this," said my companion; "a disbelief in my assertions, expressed contemptuously, marked all his answers to any request I made to him. The actions and conduct of my life were examined and discussed, until at length he sent me to the coast to live under 'the roof of his mother, while he was constantly domesticated with the vile partner of his gaieties and dissipations. Is not this enough to break a heart, or is it not enough to drive a woman to the commission of the very crimes with which she finds herself unjustly charged?"

Upon this last part of my fair friend's inquiry as to the lex talionis, I could have but one opinion to give, and agreed cordially in her view of a case to which, as it appeared to me, she had devoted some considerable portion of her attention.

"But," said I, "you are now returning home?"

"I am," replied the lady; "because the rival I am doomed to bear with is no longer in London, and because the avocations of my husband will not permit him to visit Paris, whither she is gone. He thinks I am ignorant of all this, and thinks that I am a dupe to all his artifices: and why should I undeceive him?"

"This rival," said I, "must be a very potent personage, if you are unable to break the charm which fascinates your husband, or dispel the influence which she has over him. You must have the power, if you have the will to do so."

"No," said she; "my power is gone—his heart is lost to me, and is inaccessible by me. Oh! you little know the treatment I have received from him!—from him whose whole soul was mine, but whose mind is steeled and poisoned against me!—No human being can tell what I have suffered—what I do suffer!"

It was clear I had now arrived at the conclusion of the story; all that remained was to make the application, or deduce the moral; and, I honestly confess, it appeared to me, that notwithstanding the object of her journey from her mother-in-law's house at Brighton was to rejoin her spouse in London, she would gladly have availed herself of any seasonable opportunity of changing the place of her destination. In fact, I had involved myself more deeply than I anticipated, for, having become a confidente, and having volunteered being a cavalier, I apprehended that in a minute or two I should be called forth as a champion, and, like another knighterrant, have the outraged Damosel placed under my especial care.

I confess I was now rather anxious to ascertain who my fair friend was, and what her surname—her christian name I had discovered to be Fanny. This discovery I made when she was recapitulating, more at length than I have thought it necessary to do, the dialogues between herself and her late respectable mother, in which I observed that, speaking in the

maternal character, she called herself by that pretty and simple name, which never was better suited to a human being than herself. The animation and exertion of talking, and the excitement to which part of her narrative had given rise, together with the effect of the air on a delicate skin, had lighted up her sweet countenance, and I was just on the point of taking a very decisive step in the affair, when the coach suddenly stopped, and the door being opened, a portly lady, with a bandbox, and a bouquet as big as a gooseberry-bush, picked on purpose for her, as she told us, was squeezed by the high-pressure power of Mr. Goodman's right hand into the coach. She was followed by a pale-faced girl of about ten years of age, with a smaller-sized bouquet, a basket-full of sweetheart-cakes, and a large phial full of weak red wine and water.

That I was sorry for the interruption I must candidly admit; but if the new-comers had been quiescent, it would have been more bearable, as I might have had time and leisure to consider what I had heard, and revolve in my mind not only the sad case of the fascinating creature before me, but to decide as to what step I myself should take, when we came to the place of parting.

It is curious to see how soon a feeling of sympathy, or congeniality, or whatever else it may be, renders strangers intimate; and when that sort of intimacy has begun, how it continues and shows itself by comparison with the conduct observed to the next strangers who appear. I and my fair friend were upon such good terms with each other, and so distant to the people who had just joined us, that the big lady and the little girl no doubt took us, if not for man and wife, at least for intimates of many years' standing; and then to see, the moment they came in, the care with which my fellow-traveller put her bonnet straight, and pulled her tippet round her, and put her hag in order, just as if she were before company! The contrast was very flattering to me, and so might have been much more of her conversation, but that she main-

tained it, in a low tone, so as not to be heard by the strangers, forgetting, I conclude, that the pitch of voice which rendered it inaudible to them, left me equally ill-informed.

- "Pray, sir," said the big lady, "when does this here coach git to the Olephant and Castle?"
 - "At a little past eight," said I.
 - "We goes through Kinnington, I believe," said the lady.
 - " We do."
- "If it is quite agreeable, sir," continued the awful dame, "to your good lady to have that 'are window up, I should be uncommon oblegated, because my little Emily Lawinia is jist out of the scarlet fever, and I am afeard of her taking could."

The combination of blunders in this little speech set the late weeping Fanny into a laugh; for there was in the corner of her eye that playful sparkle which no grief can quite subdus. She was as readily alive to fun as assailable by sorrow; and so it is with all people who feel strongly; for, as Moore says in one of his Meledies,

"The heart that is soonest awake to the flowers, Is always the first to be touch'd by the thorns."

The plump lady, however, found that she had made some mistake; and not at all taking into the account that people in general do not very much approve of shutting themselves up in a coach, hermetically sealed, with patients in the searlet fever, set me and my "good lady" down as two proud, conceited upstarts, and revenged herself, to our utter dismay, by dissipating the sorrows of silence, in enjeying the solace of peppermint lozenges, one of which she herself took, and administered another to her darling pet on the opposite seat; so that while my companion was gratified by the redolence of the fragrant herb through the medium of the old lady, I was indulged by the more active and efficient exertions of the living anatomy next her.

The coach rattled on, and I beheld my opposite neighbour no longer as a stranger. She leaned forward just as we

passed Kennington turnpike, and asked me whether I went on to Charing-cross, or left the coach at the Elephant and I told her that I stuck by the ship to the last, and hoped she would permit me to assist her in securing her luggage. It was at this period, in the midst of the jangle of the vehicle and the clatter of the Macadamized road, that I endeavoured to induce her to tell me her name. This she positively refused. Then I looked about for the superscription of a letter, which sometimes very inflexible ladies, under similar circumstances, will considerately let slip-and thus, one gets in a moment accidentally what worlds would not tempt them deliberately to disclose—but no—it was too dark to read writing; yet, I was so convinced that she actually held a card ready to give me, that I endeavoured gently to force her delicate right hand open, in order to obtain the desired in-But, I found I was wrong; she seemed determined, either that I should know nothing more of her, or, if I did, that I should at least have the trouble, or pleasure, as the case might be, of hunting after my intelligence.

Failing in the main point of my inquiries, I endeavoured to ascertain what part of London she resided in, and tried every street, square, row, and corner, from Greve-road, Paddington, to Dog-row, Whitechapel, in order to excite an affirmative nod, and one of those bewitching smiles which I began to love—but no. Well, thought I, the time must come when you must go, and then I shall follow; and so, if you choose to be silent and uncommunicative, and dignified and disagreeable, I can be revenged upon you; not that I could believe a woman who would generously confide the sorrows of her heart to a man, could be ill-natured enough to withhold the trifling addition of telling him when that heart was doomed to beat.

The moment arrived, and we reached the Elephant and Castle. The sudden check of Goodman's team took my poor Fanny by surprise, and threw her forward, so as to bring her somewhat in contact with myself; but the lamps of the coach had been lighted at Smithers-bottom, and we were in the dark, compared with objects without; and never shall I forget the hurried scramble into which she "righted herself," as her eye glanced on a countenance outside the carriage, brightly illuminated by the lamp on that side—she seemed thunder-struck.

- " My God!" said she, " here's Charles!"
- "Who the devil is Charles?" said I.
- "Hush!--my husband," replied the lady; "he's coming !
- -I'm so glad these people are in the coach."

The door opened, and a hand was introduced. "Fanny!" said the master of that hand, in a soft tone of endearment.

- "Here I am, love," said my companion.
- " Alone!-what-quite full?" said the husband.
- "Yes, dcar," said the wife; "and so tired. I never was so glad to get out of a coach in my life."

In a moment I thought I recognised the voice of the husband. I coiled myself into the corner. She would have got out without my being betrayed, if she had not dropped her glove.—Why the deuce had she taken it off?—A light was sent for, and the moment it came I beheld, in the object of all my indignation, and the cause of all her sorrow—the oldest friend of my life—Charles Franklin.

- "Why," exclaimed he, the moment he recognised me, " is that you!—fellow-traveller with my wife, and not known to each other?—this is curious!"
 - " Franklin!" said I, in a sort of tremor.
- "Do you know my husband, sir?" said the lady—"how very strange!"

Yes, thought I, I wish it were impossible.

- "I have not seen you these ten years," said Franklin
 "Come home with us—you must and shall—I——"
 - " Indeed," said I--" I---"
- "Oh, come, come," said Franklin; "you can have no engagement—you shall have no engagement to supersede this.

 I rejoice in having found you after so long a separation"—

and then Mr. Franklin introduced me to his wife in due form, much to the astonishment of our fellow-travellers at the other side of the coach, who concluded, by what they had seen, as indeed they had shown by what they had said, that we were, if actually not man and wife, two of the oldest and most intimate possible friends.

I have a melting heart in the way of a proposition from a friend, especially when it is made under extraordinary circumstances, like those which accompanied and preceded Franklin's; but altogether I sincerely declare, that I never was more embarrassed in my existence. I still wished to see the adventure through, and behold my Niobe in her own domicile. I looked to my charming companion for a telegraphic signal. If she had frowned a negative, I should have repeated the signal, and strenuously declined going; but by the glare of the lamp at the inn door I thought I saw affirmative in the glance of her eye, which induced me to believe, that my visit would not annoy her; and so, really, rather than doom her to a tête-à-tête with her tyrantthough he was my friend-I consented to put myself in a position as irksome almost as position could be.

We left the coach—my trips from Brighton being periodical and frequent, I had no luggage, and we proceeded, with the maid and the bandboxes, to my friend's house—of course I shall be excused mentioning the locality—but it was one of the prettiest bijoux I ever saw: good taste predominated in every part of its decorations, and I soon discovered, by certain drawings which were pendent on the walls, that my fair companion was an artist, while the pianoforte and harp bespoke her (as she had herself, indeed, informed me she was) accomplished in other sciences.

After a suitable delay of preparation, such as taking off things, and refreshing, and all that, our dinner was served —nothing could be nicer or neater.

"Fanny, dearest," said Franklin, "let me give you this wing; I know, my life, you like it."

- "No, Charles, dear, not a bit more, thank you," said Fanny.
- "Come, love, a glass of wine with me," said Charles; "
 'tis an old fashion, but we have been apart some weeks,
 so our friend will excuse it."
- "To be sure he will," said Fanny, and they drank to each other with looks admirably suited to the action.
- "How strange it is," said Franklin, "that after so long a separation, we should meet in this extraordinary manner, and that Fanny should not have found you out, or that you should not have discovered her!"
- "Why, my dear Charles," said Mrs. Franklin, "strangers do not talk to each other in stage coaches."
- "Very true, my angel," said Mr. Franklin; "but some accident might have brought your name to his ears, or his, to yours."

While all this was going on, I sat in a state of perfect amazement. Charles Franklin and I had been schoolfellows, and continued friends to a certain period of life; he was all that his wife had described him to be, in the earlier part of his life, but I confess I saw none of the heartlessness, the suspicion, the neglect, the violence, the inattention of which she also spoke; nor did I perceive, in the bright animated look of pleasure which beamed over her intelligent countenance, the slightest remains of the grief and sorrow by which she had been weighed down on the journey.

- "Do you feel tired, my Fanny?" said Franklin.
- "No, dear," replied the lady, "not very, now; but those coaches are so small when there are four people in them, that one gets cramped."

Here I felt a sort of tingling sensation behind my ears, anticipatory of what appeared to me to be a very natural question on the part of Franklin, as to whether we had been full during the whole journey; Mrs. Franklin, however, saw in a moment the false move she had made, and therefore directed the thoughts of her barbarous husband from the sub-

ject, by telling him she had a letter for him from dear mamma—meaning his mother, under whose surveillance she had been forcibly immured at Brighton.

About this period Fanny retired, and proceeded to the drawing-room, cautioning us, as she departed, "not to be long." Charles flew to the door, and opened it for his departing fair—he accompanied her beyond its threshold, and I thought I heard a sound of something very like a kiss, as they parted.

- "How strange it is," said he, resuming his seat and pushing the wine towards me, "that you should have thus accidentally fallen in with Fanny!—she is very pretty; don't you think so?"
- "More than pretty, surely," said I; "there is an intelligence, an expression, a manner about her, to me quite captivating."
- "If you were present when she is animated," said her husband, "you would see that playfulness of countenance, or rather, the variety of expression to advantage; her mind lights up her features wonderfully; there is no want of spirit about her, I can assure you."
- "I was quite surprised when I heard of your elopement," said 1.
- "Her mother," said Charles, "an old woman as proud as Lucifer, was mad after a title for her, and some old brokendown lord had been wheedled, or coaxed, or cajoled, or flattered into making her an offer, which she would not accept; and then the old lady led her such a life, that she made up her mind to the step which made her mine."
 - "And ensured your happiness," said I.
- "Why yes," said Franklin, "upon my word, taking all things into the scale, I see no cause to repent the step. Between ourselves—of course I speak as an old friend—Fanny has not the very best temper in the world, and of late has taken it into her head to be jealous. An old acquaintance of mine, whom I knew long before I was married, has been

over here from France, and I have been a good deal about with her, during her stay; and as I did not think her quite a person to introduce to Fanny, she took huff at my frequent absence from home, and began to play off a sort of retaliation, as she fancied it, with a young lieutenant of lancers of our acquaintance. I cut that matter very short; I proposed an excursion to Brighton to visit my mother, to which she acceded, and when I had settled her out of reach of her young hero, and under the eye of my mamma, I returned to fulfil my engagements in London. And now that this fair obstacle to her happiness has returned to the Continent, I have recalled my better half."

"You seem, however, to understand each other pretty well," said I.

"To be sure," replied Charles; "the only point is to keep her in a good humour, for, entre nous, her temper is the very devil—once know how to manage that, and all goes well," and I flatter myself I have ascertained the mode of doing that to a nicety."

Whether it was, that Fanny was apprehensive, that under the genial influence of her husband's wine, or upon the score of old friendship, I might let slip some part of the day's adventure, I know not, but we were very early summened to coffee, and, I confess, I was by no means displeased at the termination of a conversation which every moment I expected would take some turn that would inevitably produce a recurrence to the journey, and, perhaps, eventually tend to betray the confidence which the oppressed wife had reposed in me.

We repaired to the drawing-room.—Fanny was reclining on the sofa, looking as fascinating as ever I saw a lady look

"Charles, dearest," said she, "I thought you would never come up; you and your friend must have had something very interesting to talk about to detain you so long."

"We didn't think it long, Fan," said Charles, "because we

really were talking on a very interesting subject—we were discussing you."

- "Oh, my dear Charles!" exclaimed the lady, "you flatter me; and what did he say of me?" said she, addressing me.
- "That," said I, "I cannot tell you: I never betray anything that is told me in confidence."

Her looks explained that she was particularly glad to hear me say so, and the smile which followed was gracious in the extreme.

- "Now," said Charles, "that you have thus strangely found your way here, I hope we shall see you often."
- "And I hope so, too," said Mrs. Franklin; "I really believe sometimes that things which we blind mortals call chance are pre-ordained. I was not coming by the coach in which I met you, nor should I have been in it, if the other coach had not been full, and then——"
- "I should have lost the pleasure," said I, "of seeing an old friend enjoying the delights of domestic happiness."

Here Fanny gave me a look expressive of the perfect misery of her condition; and Charles, whose back was turned towards us at the instant, in coming up the room again, while her back was turned to him, made a sort of face, something between the sorrowful and the grotesque, which I shall never forget, but which indicated, most unequivocally, what his feelings on the subject were.

Shortly after this, the happy pair began to be so excessively kind and tender to each other, that I thought it was quite time to beat a retreat, and accordingly took my leave, earnestly pressed by both parties to repeat my visit as often as I could, and to let them see as much of me as possible. I returned them my warmest thanks for their kindness, but named no day for my return, and wished them good night.

I have not been there since. I called, indeed, once, and Charles called on me, but I have been little in Lordon during the last season, and they have been much in the country. I could not have equitably maintained an intimacy with them, for I felt neutrality would be quite out of the question; thus, although the recurrence of my old friendship with Charles Franklin has been productive of no very satisfactory results as relate to ourselves personally, it has given me an additional light in my path through the world; and now, whenever I see a picture of perfect happiness presented to my eyes, affection on one side and devotion on the other, assiduity met by kindness, and solicitude repaid with smiles, instead of feeling my heart glow with rapture at the beautiful scene before me, I instantly recollect that I once travelled to London in the Brighton Coach.

THE ENCHANTRESS.

BY MISS L. E. LANDON.

WATER-the mighty, the pure, the beautiful, the unfathomable—where is thy element so glorious as it is in thy own domain, the deep seas? What an infinity of power is in the far Atlantic, the boundary of two separate worlds, apart like those of memory and of hope! or in the bright Pacific, whose tides are turned to gold by a southern sun, and in whose bosom sleep a thousand isles, each covered with the verdure, the flowers, and the fruit of Eden! But, amid all thy hereditary kingdoms, to which hast thou given beauty, as a birthright, lavishly as thou hast to thy favourite Mediterranean? The silence of a summer night is now sleeping on its bosom, where the bright stars are mirrored, as if in its depths they had another home and another heaven. A spirit, cleaving air midway between the two, might have paused to ask which was sea, and which was sky. The shadows of earth and earthly things, resting omen-like upon the waters, alone showed which was the home and which the mirror of the celestial host.

But the distant planets were not the only lights reflected from the sea; an illuminated villa, upon the extreme point of a small rising on the coast, flung down a flood of radiance from a thousand lamps. From the terrace came the breath of the orange-plants, whose white flowers were turned to silver in the light which fell on them from the windows. Within the hall were assembled, the fairest and noblest of Sicily.

Every one, they say, has a genius for something—that of Count Arezzi was for festivals. A king, or more, the Athenian Perioles, might have welcomed his most favoured guests in such a chamber. The walls were painted in fresco, as artists paint, whose present is a dream of beauty and whose future is an immortality. Each fresco was a scene in Arcadia; and the nymphs, who were there gathering their harvest of roses, were only less lovely than the Sicilian maidens that flitted past. Among these was one much darker than her companions; her Eastern mother had bequeathed to her her black hair and her olive skin; in her eye was that brightness, and on her check was that freshness, which belong only to the earliest hour of youth-the blush had been too fleeting to burn, the smile too clear to cast that shadow which even light flings as it lengthens. But to-night the colour was heightened, the eyes wore a deeper shade, for the bue of the downcast lash was upon them, and the sweet half-opened mouth was too earnest for a smile.

Lolah was listening to those charmed words which change the girl at once into the woman-we step not ever the threshold of childhood till led by Love. Alas, this knowledge is almost always heralded by a sorrow! That morning had Lolah heard from her stern uncle, that the love she bore to her cousin Leoni di Montesiore was a childish toy, and as such was to be put away; and all her happiness had been destroyed by having to reflect upon it. Poor Lolah! how hard it is to teach the young that life is made up of many parts; and that wealth, rank, power, are more to be desired than affection! To-night she was listening to Leoni-and who ever thought of the future when the present has first taught us we love and are beloved?---still, her eyes were filled with tears, and her heart beat heavier than usual. Leoni spoke of hope; but is not hope only a more gentle word for fear? And yet, with that mysterious contradiction which makes the fever of human existence, neither would have renounced the certainty of the other's affection for the careless content of yesterday. Strange, that ignorance should be our best happiness in this life, and yet be the one we are ever striving to destroy!

Leoni and his cousin stood in one of the deep windows; she leaning as if to inhale the fragrance of an Indian rose, and mark a flower which, brought from a far land, seemed more delicate than its bright companion. A pedestal of the green malachite stood beside, and on it a vase carved with the sacrifice of Iphigenia; these shut them out from the rest of the dancers.

"My father," exclaimed Leoni, "gave his daughter to her father;"—then a bitter thought of the wasted heritage, which had made his noble name a fetter rather than an aid, for a moment caused the lover to pause.

"Holy Mother!—but my uncle has just entered the room; let me go, ere he finds me talking to you."

Lolah waited not for an answer; another moment, and she had passed her slender arm through that of one of her companions, and was lost in the crowd. It was so sudden, Leoni scarcely believed she was gone; surely her sweet low sigh was on the air—no! it was but the breath of the Bengal rose. His eye wandered round; it fell on the sculptured vase, and there stood the Grecian father, a witness to the sacrifice of his youngest and loveliest child.

"Even so, my gentle Lolah, will the altar be thy tomb."

Leoni started, for a figure now stepped from the shade of the column: not only his last words, but their whole conversation must have been heard.

"Yes, Don Leoni," said the intruder, replying rather to his thoughts and look, "I have heard your discourse; pardon me when I say it was wilfully overheard. It is long since I have hearkened to the eager and happy words of young affection, and I listened as if to music; and, like music, they have died in hearing."

Leoni thought he would as soon that the dialogue had not been quite so attractive—strange, that it should be so to the cold and proud Donna Medora!

Again his companion answered to his thoughts—"You marvel at my speech; I could wonder myself at this still lingering sympathy with the base lot of humanity: but mortal breath and mortal frame cannot quite break away from mortal ties. Don Leoni, I pity you—I wish to serve you: I know not, if in giving you wealth I give you happiness; but wealth I can give. This is not the place for such words as mine must be. Breathe not in living ear what I have said: my power to serve you depends on your silence. Come to-morrow to our palazzo."

Medora turned from him and descended the terrace. The weakness of our nature—how soon any strong emotion masters it! Leoni stood breathless with surprise and hope; be had once or twice before seen Donna Medora, and he had heard much of her. Young-she had seen but three-andtwenty summers deepen into autumn; beautiful -for it was as if Heaven had set its seal on her perfect face,-her life was one of sadness and solitude. The cathedral where she knelt, the poor whom she aided, the sick-room of her aged father, and her own lonely chamber—these were the haunts of Medora. When about seventeen, a severe illness had stricken her even unto death; almost by a miracle she was restored to life, but never to youth—the shadow of the grave, to which she had so nearly approached, seemed to rest upon her. Her glad laugh never again made the air musical as with the singing of a bird in spring; her light step forgot the dance; and her lute was given to another. The sympathy she once had for joy was now kept entire for sorrow; but the mother who died in her arms, the father whose long and sickly age she soothed and supported, thought her nature had, in so nearly approaching heaven, caught something of its elements. And Lolah, who, as a distant relative, sometimes visited Don Manfredi's chamber, said that Medora was almost

an angel; and added—"I should think her quite one, but that I do not fear her, and that she seems unhappy."

It was reported that love and religion had held a bitter conflict in her heart. Before her illness she had been betrothed to a young cavalier; on her recovery she refused to fulfil her engagement, alleging that the instability of life had taught her the vanity of human ties: all she now asked, was to devote what remained of existence to her aged parents. Remonstrances, prayers, were alike unavailing; and the young Count Rivoli became one of the Knights of Malta. Some years had since passed; and in the gay and hurrying circle of Palermo, Medora's name was rarely mentioned.

Leoni dwelt upon her promise of assistance; but the more he reflected, the more hopeless it seemed. How could she give wealth, the daughter of one of Sicily's poorest nobles?

Our young Sicilian was naturally of a daring and reckless temper; and resolving to hope, without analysing why or wherefore, he re-entered the saloon. He danced no more with Lolah; yet he had the satisfaction of seeing her look sad and languid while dancing with another. But how restless was the night that followed! Hope is feverish enough at all times; what must it be when stimulated by curiosity!

The first blush of morning awakened Leoni from his light slumbers: he looked out; the hue of the sky was that too of the sea; the waves of the Mediterranean floated on as if freighted with roses; yet how Leoni wished they were glittering with the clear colourless light of moon! Never say that time is of equal length: the movement of the hours is as irregular as the beating of the heart which measures them. A year of ordinary life, if counted by hopes, fears, and fancies, was in that lingering morning. At length, noon sounded from many a turret; and, regardless of the heat, the young Count hurried to the palazzo.

When he reached the pier, a growd of boutmen offered their services.

"What, ho! Michele and Stefano! I have tried the swift-

ness of the Santa Catharina before now. Remember, I am as impatient as. . . . "

"Your lordship always is," replied Stephano, who, having an answer always ready, always answered.

Leoni jumped into the boat, whose celerity showed that the wax taper her pious rowers offered to Santa Catharina yearly on the day of her fête, was not thrown away; though, perhaps, the activity of the brothers who rowed did as much as their piety towards sending the little vessel swiftly through the waters.

"You want to land," said Michele, "at San Marco's steps?" turning the head of the boat to the accustomed landing-place.

The steps to which San Marco lent his name had been worth many a sequin to them; for the winding path to the left led to Lolah's villa,

- "No, no," replied Leoni; "to the Nymph's Cove."
- "Signor," returned Michele, "those steps lead only to Count Manfredi's garden."
 - "And it is thither I am going."

The boatmen exchanged looks of astonishment bordering on dismay, which was not diminished by the silence of the usually gay cavalier. Montefiore leant back in the boat: as the interview drew nigh, a feeling of fear—not fear, that was what none of his house had ever yet known—but of awe, stole over him. Many a mood had that morning passed through his mind; disbelief—but surely the sad seriousness of such a one as Donna Medora could never stoop to mockery!—then hope, like a sweet summer-shower, when dark clouds break away into sudden light—till all his thoughts fixed on one mysterious circumstance—that he was the only person who had seen her the preceding evening. The Count d'Arezzi himself was not aware that she had been among his guests.

While musing on the singularity of this, they arrived at the landing-place, and found the Senora's page in waiting. Dumb from his birth, the boy Julio had been brought up in the Manfredi family, where his weak frame and want of language had exempted him from all but the lightest tasks.

- "What would the Senora Lolah say to this visit?" cried Stefano, the moment his master was out of hearing. "The lady Medora is beautiful as an angel; I marvel we never rowed cavalier hither before."
- "We never have; but I have, and in an evil hour. Well had it been for my first master if he had never looked on a face so fair and so false. I remember when I was wont of an evening to row the Count Rivoli to this very spot. We used to see a white veil waving among the trees-it was the Senora watching his approach: they were very happy then. But'I know not how it was, unless it be the inconstancy of women; for change is as natural to them as it is to the sea. The lady Medora was taken dangerously ill: during her fearful sickness, never was truer lover than my master; the shrine of Our Lady was laden with gifts; and night after night he paced beneath the window of her room,-till she who lay dying above, could scarcely look paler than he who watched below. And yet, on her recovery she refused to wed him. She declared, that, in her danger, she had made a vow not to marry. They say the young Count knelt at her feet, but in vain; and for her sake he forswore the face of woman and his native country. Count Rivoli is now a Knight of Malta. What has the Senora Medora to do with another lover?"
- "Well, yonder gallant's step is not much like a lover's," replied Stefano, as a bend in the path enabled them to see the slow and thoughtful pace at which Leoni followed his guide.

The boy who led the way walked feebly and languidly, and Montefiore hurried him not. The gloom of the neglected garden added to that on his spirits; and the wild eyes and pale face of his dumb attendant seemed to fix his attention painfully. It was a countenance whose unhappiness was catching; for Leoni thought how terrible was his lot, de-

sarred from that noblest privilege of humanity, interchange of thought, and its sweetest interchange of feelings! The boy stopped suddenly at the door of a summer-house, so hidden by the dark branches of the pine trees around, that the stranger might have passed it by unnoticed. They entered together; the page approached his mistress, pointed to the visitor, and then left the room.

Without rising from her own seat, Medora signed to Leoni to take the one opposite. At first she seemed so absorbed in thought, that even his entrance was insufficient to rouse her; she evidently hesitated to speak, as if she had not yet resolved on the purport of her words. Her young and impetuous companion found the silence very oppressive; but even his impetuosity was subdued by the gloom around him.

Panelled with the scarce woods of other lands, whose cornices were carved in quaint wreaths of flowers, mingled with crosses of divers shapes and the family arms, it was obvious that a rich though barbarous taste had here once lavished its wealth. But Time had, as usual, laughed the works of man to scorn; and pomp amidst its decay sickened over its vanity. The colours were all merged in the heavy black of age; the gildings were tarnished; and the cornices broken and defaced. The temple, of which but a few fallen columns remain—the mighty city, whose stately fragments are strewed in the desert-are solemn, not sorrowful. But the desolation of yesterday comes home to every man's heartto-morrow its portion may be his own, and the faded tapestry, the discoloured floor, and the mouldering painting, speak of sorrow which still exists, and poverty which is still endured.

Leoni gazed round the gloomy banquet-room, and remembered a festival which had been given there; he was a child at the time, and perhaps his memory lent something of its own gaiety to the scene. But he was roused from his reverie by Medora's voice.

" My silence, Count," said she, " must seem strange; but

when you have heard the story I am about to reveal, you will not marvel that I hesitate to speak words which are even as those of Fate. You love, and you are beloved; surely you might be happy. There is but one obstacle, that of wealth. Leoni, I can make you rich—rich as the fabled kings, who poured forth gold like water: dare you accept the offer?"

"On what conditions?" exclaimed Leoni, almost unconsciously clasping the cross of the order which hung at his neck.

"On none," returned his companion. "Fear not my conditions, but your own use of the wealth I can bestow. Dare you take your destiny into your own hands? But I will place my life before you, and then judge for yourself."

Medora rose from her seat.

"Not here, where the uncharmed air might bear away my words, dare I tell my history. Count Leoni, you have heard of wondrous and fearful secrets, whose spell is over stars and over spirits; you have heard of mortals to whom immortal power is given—such power is mine. You deem you are speaking to your cousin—would that you were! I have but the borrowed likeness of her whose life long since reached its appointed boundary. Give me your hand, and in a few minutes we shall be in my own dwelling, amid those immeasurable deserts where only my story may be communicated. Do you consent to accompany me?"

Leoni answered by taking the hand extended towards him. Even as he touched it, a dense vapour filled the room; he felt himself raised with a sudden and dizzy velocity; he leant back; the cloud was as the wave on which a swimmer floats, borne by no effort of his own; and a pleasant sensation of sleep came over him. He was roused by the light touch of his companion, and startled into consciousness. They were standing on the top of a mighty tower; one of those, whose height, seen from below, seems to reach even unto the heavens—but the summit once gained, we only find what an

immeasureable upward distance remains. A hot bright noon filled the air with light, but not with fertility; for far as the eye could reach—and the clear colourless atmosphere seemed to extend the sight even to infinity-spread an arid desert, as if sand were an element, and only shared its empire with the sky. But immediately around the tower lay the giant ruins of a once glorious city; one of those built when the world was in the strength of its youth, and reared buildings which were the work of centuries, and yet but the work of a life: the cradle and the grave were then far apart. shadow of the last rests upon the first, and all life groans beneath the weight and darkness thereof. Then the marble of the quarry and the gold of the mine lay on the surface; the fertile soil of the East yielded forth its abundance; and the labour, which was in man's destiny, needed not to be all given to that sad and perpetual strife with hunger which belongs to our worn-out and weary age.

It seemed, however, as if Time had long paused in his work of destruction; the vast masses of carved granite, the broken columns, the shattered walls where once four chariots drove abreast, all-remained as they had done for ages. Year after year the burning sunshine forbade the rain to fall, and speedily dried up the dews of night; no green moss, no creeping plant, as in his native Italy, hid the ruin which they were aiding: the bare white marble shone distinct from the sands.

Leoni turned to his companion; her face and garb were wholly changed: she stood upon her native tower, and had resumed her native shape. As Medora, she had been so like his own Lolah—a slight, low figure, whose grace was that of childhood, the same sweet pleading eyes, alike, save that hope gave its gladness to the face of Leila, while that of Medora had all the mournfulness of memory. But the glorious heauty of the being at his side, though it wore the shape, had scarce the semblance of mortality. The face had

that high and ideal cast of beauty which made the divinities of Greece divine; for the mind was embodied in the features. The large blue eyes were of the colour of the noon, when heaven is full of light; they looked upon you like the far-off shining of some vast and lonely planet. Her garb and turban had an Oriental splendour; a silver veil mingled with her rich profusion of hair, which was bound by strings of costly pearls. Round her arm was rolled a band of gold, and on her hand she bore a signet of some strange clear stone, covered with mystic characters. Her height and step were like a queen's, such as might have beseemed the young Empress of Palmyra, ere she walked in the triumph of the Roman conqueror.

"I may not enter," said she, "the hall of my father's tomb but in mine own shape: follow me."

Casting the golden sandals from her feet, she led the way down a flight of black marble steps. They paused at the foot of the tower; two enormous doors flew open, and though it was the bright light of noon he had left behind, Leoni stood dazzled at the glory of the hall. The crystal roof was traversed by a shining zodiac, lit by a pale unearthly flame; the black marble floor was covered with inscriptions in gold, but they were in unknown ciphers: Leoni observed, however, that they were similar to those on the girdle and the border of his companion's robe. The gigantic pillars which supported the vast dome were also of black marble, covered, in like manner, with golden hieroglyphics. Between them were immense vases, each one a varying mosaic of precious stones, and filled with the same pale flame which lighted the zodiac above. In the centre of the hall stood a huge crystal globe, and upon its summit a funeral urn of the purest alabaster, on which neither figure nor sign was graven. Around were placed seven silver tripods, whereon were burning odoriferous woods, which filled the air with their perfumes.

"In yonder urn," said Medora, "lie the ashes of my

father. I have obtained that gift in search of which his life was spent; and yet I would that our mingled ashes were strewn on those elements we have mastered, and in vain."

She now seated herself on a radiant throne opposite, and Leoni leant on the lion's skin at her feet. We have said that Leoni was of a race to whom fear was unknown, yet he felt his heart beat quicker than ordinary, and his glance quailed before the melancholy and spiritual beauty of the eyes now shining upon him.

"You see in me," said his mysterious companion, "the only living descendant of those Eastern Magi to whom the stars revealed their mysteries, and spirits gave their power. Age after age did sages add to that knowledge which, by bequeathing to their posterity, they trusted would in time combat to conquer their mortality. But the glorious race. perished from the earth, till only my father was left, and I his orphan child. Marvels and knowledge paid his life of fasting and study. All the spirits of the elements bowed down before him; but the future was still hidden from his eyes, and Death was omnipotent. His power of working evil had no bounds, but his power of good was limited; and yet it was good that he desired. How dared he put in motion those mighty changes, which seemed to promise such happiness on earth, while he was ignorant of what their results might be? and of what avail was the joy he might pour out on life, over whose next hour the grave might close, and only make the parting breath more bitter from the blessings which it was leaving behind?

"I was no unworthy daughter of such a sire; I advanced in these divine studies even to his wish, and looked to the future with a hope which many years had deadened in himself, but from which I caught an omen of ultimate success. Alas! he mastered not his destiny: I have said before, his ashes are in yonder urn, A few unwholesome dews on a summer night were mightier than all his science. For a

time I struggled not with despair; but youth is buoyant, and habit is strong. Again I pored over the mystic scroll-again I called on the spirits with spell and with sign. Many a mystery was revealed, many a wonder grew familiar; but still Death remained at the end of all things, as before. One night I was on the terrace of my tower. Above me was the deep blue sky, with its stars-worlds filled, perchance, with the intelligence which I sought. On the desert below was the phantasm of a great city. I looked on its small and miserable streets, where hunger and cold reigned paramount, and man was as wretched as if flung but yesterday on the earth, and there had been as yet no time for art to yield its assistance, or labour to bring forth its fruit. I gazed next on scenes of festivity, but they were not glad; for I looked from the wreath into the head it encircled, and from the careanet of gems to the heart which beat beneath—and I saw envy, and hate, and repining, and remorse. I turned my last glance on the palace whithin its walls; but there the purple was spread as a pall, and the voice of sorrow and the cry of pain were loud on the air. I bade the shadows roll away upon the winds, and rose depressed and in sorrow. I was not alone: one of those glorious Spirits, whose sphere was far beyond the power of our science, whose existence we rather surmised than knew, stood beside me.

"From that hour a new existence opened before me. I loved, and I was beloved—love, to which imagination gave poetry, and mind gave strength, was the new element added to my being. Alas! how little do the miserable race to which I belong know of such a feeling! They blend a moment's vanity, a moment's gratification, into a temperary excitement, and they call it love. Such are the many, and the many make the wretchedness of earth. And yet your own heart, Leoni, and that of my gentle cousin, may witness for my words, there are such things as truth, and tenderness, and devotion in the world; and such redeem the darkness and degradation of its

lot. Nay, more—if ever the mystery of our destiny be unravelled, and happiness be wrought out of wisdom, it will be the work of Love.

"It matters little to tell you of my blessedness; but my very heart was filled with the light of those radiant eyes, which were to me what the sun is to the world. Yet one dark shadow rested on my soul, beyond even their influence. Death had been the awful conqueror with whom my race had so often struggled, and to whom they had so often yielded. A mortal, I loved an immortal, and the fear of separation was ever before me; yet a long and a happy time passed away before my fear found words.

"It was one evening we were floating over the earth, and the crimson cloud on which we lay was the one where the sun's last look had rested. Its gleam fell on a small nook, while all around was fast melting into shade. Still, it was a sad spot which was thus brightened—it was a new-made grave. Over the others the long grass grew luxuriantly, and speckled, too, by many small and fragrant flowers; but on this, the dark-brown earth had been freshly turned up, and the red worm writhed restlessly about its disturbed habitation. Some roses had been scattered, but they were withered; their sweet leaves were already damp and discoloured. All wore the present and outward signs of our eternal doom—to perish in corruption.

"The shadows of the evening fell, deepening the gloom into darkness—the one last bright ray had long been past, when a youth came from the adjacent valley. That grave but yesterday received one who was to have been his bride—his betrothed from childhood, for whose sake he had been to far lands and gathered much wealth, but who had pined in his absence and died. He flung himself on the loath-some place, and the night-wind bore around the ravings of his despair. Wo for that selfishness which belonged to my mortality! I felt at that moment more of terror than of pity. I thought of myself: Thus must 1, with all my power, my

science, and loved by one into whose sphere Death comes not, even thus must I perish! True, the rich spices, the perfumed woods, the fragrant oils, which would feed the sacred fire of my funereal pyre, would save my mortal remains from that corruption which makes the disgust of death even wore than its dread. A few odoriferous ashes alone would be left for my urn. Yet not the less must I share the common doom of my race,—I must die!

"'Nay, my beautiful!' said the voice, which was to me as the fiat of life and of death, so utterly did it fill my existence; why should we thus yield to a vague terror? Listen, my beloved! I know where the waters of the fountains of life roll their eternal waves—I know I can bear you thither and bid you drink from their source, and over lips so hallowed Death hath no longer dominion. But, alas! I know not what may be the punishment. Like yourselves, the knowledge of our race goes on increasing, and our experience, like your own, hath its agonies. None have dared what I am about to dare, and the future of my deed is even to me a secret. But what may not be borne for that draught which makes my loved one as immortal as my love!'

" I gazed on the glorious hope which lighted up his radiant brow, and I said to him, 'Give me an immortality which must be thine.' Worlds rolling on worlds lay beneath our feet when we stood beside the waters of life. A joyful pride swelled in my heart. I, the last and the weakest of my race, had won that prize which its heroes and its sages had found too mighty for their grasp. A sound as of a storm rushing over ocean startled me when I stooped to drink, the troubled waves rose into tumultuous eddies, their fiery billows parted, and from amid them appeared the dark and terrible Spirit of Necessity. The cloud of his awful face grew deeper as it turned on me. 'Child of a sinful and a fallen kind!' said he, and he spoke the language most familiar to my ear, which yet sounded like that of another world, 'who have ever measured by their own small wisdom that which is infinite-drink, and be immortal! Be immortal, without the wisdom or the power belonging unto immortality. Drink!'

"I shrank from the starry waters as they rose to my lip, but a power stronger than my will compelled me to their taste: The draught ran through my veins like ice. I turned to where my once-worshipped lover was leaning. The same change had passed over both. Our eyes met, and each looked into the other's heart, and there dwelt hate-bitter, loathing, and eternal hate. I had changed my nature; I was no longer the gentle, up-looking mortal he had loved. I had changed my nature; he was no longer to me the one glorious and adored being. We gazed on each other with fear and abhorrence. The dark power, whose awful brow was fixed upon us like Fate, again was shrouded in the kindling waters. By an impulse neither could control, the Spirit and I flung ourselves down the steep blue air, but apart, and each muttering, 'Never! never!' And that word 'never' told our destiny. Never could either feel again that sweet deceit of happiness, which, if it be a lie, is worth all truth. Never more could each heart be the world of the other.

"Our feelings are as little in our power as the bodily structure they animate. My love had been sudden, uncontrollable, and born not of my own will—and such was my hate. As little could I master the sick shudder his image now called up, as I could the passionate beating of the heart it had once excited. I stood alone in my solitary hall-I gazed on the eternal fire burning over the tomb of my father, and I wished it were burning over mine. For the first time I felt the limitations of humanity. The desire of my race was in me accomplished—I was immortal; and what was this immortality? A dark and measureless future. Alas, we had mistaken life for felicity! What was my knowledge? it only served to show its own vanity; what was my power, when its exercise only served to work out the decrees of an inexorable necessity? I had parted myself from my kind, but I had not acquired the nature of a spirit. I had lost of humanity but its illusions and they alone are what render it supportable. The mysticscrolls over which I had once pored with such intenseness, were now flung aside; what could they teach me. Time was to me but one great vacancy; how could I fill it up, who had neither labour nor excitement? I sat me down mournfully. and thought of the past. Why, when love is perished, should its memory remain? I had said to myself, So long as I have life, one deep feeling must absorb my existence. A change -and that too of my own earnest seeking-had passed over my being; and the past, which had been so precious, was now as a frightful phantasm. The love which alters, in its inconstancy may set up a new idol, and worship again with a pleasant blindness; but the love which leaves the heart with a full knowledge of its own vanity and nothingness,-which saith. The object of my passion still remains, but it is worthless in my sight-never more can I renew my early feeling -I marvel how I ever could have loved-I loathe, I disdain the weakness of my former self; -ah, the end of such love is indeed despair!

"Do you mark yonder black marble slab, which is spread as over a tomb? It covers the most silvery fountain that ever mirrored the golden light of noon, or caught the fall of the evening dew, in an element bright as themselves. The radiant likeness of a Spirit rests on those waters. I bade him give duration to the shadow he flung upon the wave, that I might gaze on it during his absence. The first act of my immortality was to shut it from my sight. There must that black marble rest for ever.

"Why need I tell you of the desolation with which centuries have passed over my head? At length I resolved to leave my solitude, to visit earth; to seek, if I could not recall, my humanity; to interest myself in my species, and help even while I despised them. The thousand hues of sunset were deepening into the rich purple of twilight, when I paused over a Sicilian palace. Lemon and orange trees crowded the terrace, and their odours floated upwards towards an apartment

where every casement was flung open for the sake of air. One emaciated hand stretched out on the purple silk coverlet, the other extended towards an aged female beside, reclined a young and beautiful girl; she was dying. A week of fever had done the work of years; life had burnt fiercely out; and the fragile tenement, wasted and worn away, lay in that languid repose which is the harbinger of death. The long black hair hung in pall-like masses; it had been losened in the restlessness of pain. Her mother kept bathing the sunken temples with aromatics, but they throbbed no longer, and the sufferer motioned to her to desist. She now asked rest rather than relief; but life yet put forth its last energy in affection, and clasping her mother's hand, she turned her large soft eyes to her father. He stood watching her, as though, while he watched, life could not escape. Suddenly, a slight convulsion passed over the face of the dying girl; she gasped as if for air. and raised herself on her pillow without assistance, but sank back with the effort;—she was dead. A wild scream broke from the mother, and she fell senseless by the bed. The father caught the lifeless hands of his child, and, mad with despair, implored her not to leave him. -came from the further part of the chamber: there was now no one to disturb by that passion of sorrow.

"Human misery is an awful sight. The old nurse approached the corse; she smoothed the long dark hair,—she placed a chaplet of roses on the brow, and a few fresh flowers in the lifeless hand. The rich light from the open casement fell on the white dress, and still whiter face, with a mocking cheerfulness. The aged creature could restrain her grief no longer; she rushed to a darker part of the room, and wept. A thought struck me: over the departed I had no power; but I could spare the agony of the living. Yes, I would take upon myself human relations, would bind myself by human ties,—I would be to them even as a daughter. The next moment I had assumed the shape of their child.

"Far in an unfrequented track of the southern seas lies a

small island; there are aged trees and early blossoms; and amid them myriads of shining insects and bright-winged birds make the solitude glad with life; but they are its sole inhabitants. Once driven away by a tempest from its ordinary course, a ship discovered the little isle. The Spaniards landed; they took possession in the name of the Madonna, and with pieces of grey rock piled up a cross. Human eye has never since dwelt on that lovely and lonely shore; but beneath the shadow of that cross lie the mortal remains of your cousin Medora.—Gradually I allowed some sign of returning life to appear; the old nurse, who was bending over the body, was the first to exclaim, 'Bring a looking-glass, for there is breath within those lips.' The slight cloud left on the mirror was as the very atmosphere of hope; eyes dim with weeping, cheeks pale with watching, were lighted up on the instant.

"I felt a new and keen happiness in the happiness I had It needs not to tell how I gradually recovered, and ' how the parents, whose very life seemed bound up in their child's, were never weary of gazing on their recovered trea-But a grief of which I had not dreamt awaited me. Medora had been betrothed to a young Sicilian nobleman. The moment an interview was permitted, the lover was at my feet, full of that hope and that joy he was never to know again. You are aware how the marriage was broken off, on the plea of a vow to the Virgin made in the extremity of danger; but you know not the agony I inflicted, or that I endured, in listening to the passionate despair of Rivoli; and when he said, 'Your death I might have borne-it was the will of God, and life would have lived on a hope beyond the grave; but thus to find you changed to me, to think that you can hold our love an offence in the sight of Heaven, and that I, who have loved, and who do love you'so unutterably, that I should be the first sacrifice you offer up, - this, Medora, is more than I can bear!'

" In listening thus, how I repented me of my rash inter-

ference with the course of human life! If I had given joy, I had also caused more sorrow; and, worse, I had reason to question whether the grief of the marriage thus broken off did not embitter, despite of all my care, the brief period of Donna Maria's life.

"I have now little more to say of myself. The last few years have been devoted to Don Manfredi's declining age; wearisome has the task been, and still I have clung to it. I own, yet shun, the fatal truth, that my lot is but an awful solitude, without duties or affections—those ties and blessings of humanity. And now for the wealth I offer you: I know not of its consequences, but I know those consequences can be but in your own acts. I do no more than a mere mertal might. On this interview there is imposed the condition—secrecy; on the possession of riches there is none. The spirits of riches are the first and the meanest which yield to science: it shall be my care that they reach you in simple and ordinary chanels. Speak!"

"Give me," exclaimed Leoni, "give me wealth; give me Lolah!"

A purple cloud filled the glorious hall; again stupor overwhelmed him; again he awakened, and there he was in the lonely summer-room, and Medora, with her pale child-like face and black garments, at his side; but he met the large dark eyes filled with a strange wild light, and he knew it was no dream.

"Leave me now," said Medora; "but on your life be silent. Life and secrecy are one. Farewell!"

Dizzy with expectation, Leoni returned to the boat. The clock of San Francisco's abbey struck; he had been away but one hour. Pallid and abstracted, there was something in his look that effectually silenced the boatmen; nay, they remained in gloomy stillness after he had left them.

- " He has met with a refusal," at length said Stefano.
- "Rather say, that there is evil in you dreary palazzo and that pale girl, and that their influence is on him. The lady

Medora is kind and generous, but there is a curse follows her; and when did ever gift of hers turn to good?"

"The notary Signor Grazie awaits your pleasure," said a domestic, on Leoni's entrance to his palace.

The notary's business was soon told. The Marchese Ravenna, a distant relative of the young Count, had made him his heir; and boundless was the wealth the aged miser left behind him. That evening saw Leoni a welcome guest at his uncle's; and but a few weeks fled past, ere orange-flowers bound the bridal tresses of his gentle cousin. The same day died Count Manfredi; and, as if her life were one with his, Donna Medora breathed her last at the very moment of her father's death.

"One, two, three; so late, so very late," exclaimed the Countess di Montefiore, "and Leoni still from home; there was a time when I dreamed not of keeping these solitary vigils."

Wearily Lolah arose from the velvet oftoman, and again the hour was struck by one of their own clocks, a few minutes later than the Abbey; it was succeeded (for the time-piece was a rare device of askilful artist) by a sweet and lively air one of those Neapolitan barcarolles which, like the glad music of Memnon's lyre, seemed inspired by the morning sunshine.

"Mockery," sighed the youthful watcher, "for the flight of time to be told in music!"

She began to pace the room,—that common resource of extreme lassitude, when sleep, to which the will consents not, hangs heavy on the eyelids. Truly night was made for sleep; since to its wakeful hours belongs an oppression unknown to the very dreariest hours of day. The stillness is so deep, the solitude so unbroken, the fever brought on by want of rest so weakens the nerves, that the imagination exercises despotic and unwholesome power, till, if the heart have a fear or a sorrow, up it arises in all the force and terror of gigantic exaggeration.

- The Countess had long since dismissed her attendants; yet the pearls still braided her hair, which hung nearly to her feet, in two large plaits; and a white silk robe, carelessly fastened at the waist, shrouding her whole figure in its loose folds, gave her something of that ghost-like appearance with which our fancy invests the habitants of another world. And truly, with her pale cheek and melancholy eyes, she looked like a spirit wandering mournfully around the scene of former pleasures. Yet what luxury was there not gathered in that gorgeous room? The purple silk curtains excluded the night-dews, while they allowed the air to enter freighted with odours from the orange trees on the terrace below. The nuns of the Convent of St. Valerie, so celebrated for their skill in embroidery, had exerted their finest art in transferring all the flowers of spring to the white velvet ottomans: you might have asked, which was real-the rose on the cushion, or that which hung from the crystal vase? The jewels lavished on the toys scattered round, had been held a noble dower by the fairest maiden in Sicily. On the walls were pictures, each one a world of thought and of beauty. The Grecian land-a scapes of Gaspar Poussin, who delighted in the graceful nymph, and the marble fane which recalled a mythology all poetry, as if in his dreams he had dwelt in Thessaly. rugged scenes which Salvator Rosa loved to delineate—the forest, dark with impenetrable depths; the bare and jagged rock, rough as if Nature had forgotten it; the aged pine. riven by the lightning, and beside it some handit, desolate and stricken as the tree by which he stood, but with a cruel defiance in his looks, as though he longed to resent on all the injuries he had received from a few. Near at hand hung one of the glad earths and sunny skies in which the more buoyant spirit of Claude Lorraine revelled, as if its native element were suashine. There were portraits too, the noble and the beautiful of her race; faces which told a whole history-and wet Lolah marked them not.

But one twelvemonth had she been a bride, and her husband's presence was unfamiliar to his home. Day after day did some unkind friend—for when do friends not delight in the sorrow of the prosperous?—come to her with tales how the Count's wealth was lavished on others less lovely than herself. And even that very evening had her father been with her, telling her that no wealth could hold out against Leoni's reckless prodigality-against his mad passion for gaming. In pity to the gentle creature, who could only lean on his bosom and weep, he might not tell her that the husband of her love was an object of universal suspicion, and that sorcery and the once stainless name of Montesiore were coupled together. He left her with those words of fondness which are never, and those words of comfort which ever are, said in vain. Wretched she had long been, but not till to-night had she owned the truth even to herself—owned that all her dreams of happiness, all the fairy creations of her fancy, had melted away, like the gardens and palaces she had seen painted on the air in the Bay of Naples.

Weak, selfish, and vain, Leoni's was the very nature which wealth corrupts; he looked upon it but as the source of selfgratification. He forgot that the power-with which the rich man is endued, is a sacred duty, whose neglect brings its own punishment; and that he who seeks pleasure with reference to himself, not others, will ever find that pleasure is only anether name for discontent. At first Lolah was the idol of his heart—she became his bride—and a few happy weeks were passed in retirement and bliss; but Leoni soon looked beyond the small circle of the heart. They went to Palermo, and there he took delight in magnificence; his vanity exulted in glittering display, it was gratified by envy and wonder. Fête succeeded fête, till he himself grew weary of his prodigal hospitality: he craved for variety; and Lolah's timid and gentle temper was ill fitted to be the check he needed. Gambling soon became a habit; his enormous losses were an excitement; he knew he could repair them with a wish-he cared not, therefore, for the money he lost; but he desired to conquer fortune, and held success to be the triumph of skill. In the early part of his career, that evil and grudging feeling with which people regard great and sudden wealth, exhausted itself in prophecies of the certain ruin to which the young spendthrift Count was hastening; and when those prophecies were not fulfilled, their utterers were disappointed; they viewed it as a sin that he had proved their omens untrue. In sad truth, half our forebodings of our neighbours are but our own wishes, which we are ashamed to utter in any other form.

Gradually, the crowds at the Montesiore palace grew less noble; those whose consequence was diminished by its splendour, were the first to turn away; their example was sollowed by those who had nothing to gain; then went those who are ever led by example;—till the palace only gathered the dissipated and the dishonoured; the needy, who made want their plea, for even they needed an excuse; and the gamester, who was reckless whither he went, so that he indulged his passion. Old friends one after another became cold, and new friends were insolent and familiar. All this cut deep, and Leoni plunged still more madly into every possible excess; and when all other aids to forgetfulness failed, the red wine-cup was drained for oblivion.

Pale and sad the young Countess passed the weary hours in her splendid solitude; she felt the loss of friends less than Leoni, for had she not lost her husband? That evening had, however, been spent from home; it was the time of the Carnival—she had been to a masque as an Indian maiden; and now sat up for Leoni's return, half in girlish vanity, half because she could not bear the day to close without seeing him: she knew that he would let himself in by a private portal, which he had had expressly made, and that he must cross that chamber on his way to his own. Chilly and fatigued, she again drew the rich flower-wrought cashmere around her; for a moment she sat, her cheek resting on her hand; at length she leaned back on the ottoman, and sunk into disturbed and half-conscious slumber. She was roused by a noise—and starting up to meet Leoni, saw a stranger in the

act of putting aside the curtains of the window through which he was entering. Excess of terror made her speechless for a moment; when the man, who was in the garb of a boatman, said,

"For the love of the saints, be calm, lady! I would lay down my life in your service; just hear me."

Lolah now recognised Stefano, who had before their marriage brought her many a note and flower from Leoni.

" Is the Count within?" asked he anxiously.

"I expect him every instant; but tell me your business at this strange hour."

Stefano hesitated.

"Perhaps it were best I should, and yet—do you know where I could find his Excellency?"

Lolah shook her head mournfully.

"Lady, I must then tell you all;" and he looked aside, and spoke hastily, as if unwilling to watch the misery his words must cause. "Lady, to-morrow this palace will be seized by the officers of the Inquisition, the Count—now St. Rosalie punish his enemies! is accused of sorcery—to-morrow he will be arrested. My brother is one of their servants; but the Count is our old patron—he gave me a hint—I rowed hither—by means of a fishing-hook I fastened a rope to the balcony, and sprung up: I know every room of the palace, and thought to take my chance of meeting the Count Leoni; my boat lies below—a ship will sail from the bay at the break of [day—they need sail fast, for they have better wine aboard than they would wish to have known in Palermo."

"Holy Virgin! if my husband should not return!" exclaimed Lolah, wringing her hands in an agony. Stefano had not a word of comfort for such an emergency. Suddenly the Countess rose from her seat: "I will trust in the blessed saints for his return: what is the latest period that we can escape?"

"It will not be light this half hour, and I will answer for his safe pilotage while dark; but if the day once break, the fishermen will be abroad, and there will not be a chance of escape."

Lolah sank on her knees, and remained for a few moments with her face hidden between her hands in earnest prayer. Rising from the ground, she hastily addressed Stefano:

- "Will you remain here and wait as long as you dare for the Count's arrival? I will return in a few minutes; I only go to make some brief preparation for our flight."
- "Your flight?" ejaculated the boatman, "you are in no danger."
- "It matters not," answered she passionately; "I will not leave my husband's side."

Ten minutes had scarcely elapsed, when she reappeared in a plain dark travelling dress, and dragging with her a large horseman's cloak.

- "This will conceal him, as he must stay for no change of apparel. But can it be so long? why, it is a quarter of an hour since you told me we had but half a one; and the gay and fairy chime of the time-piece told four o'clock.
 - "It is very dark still," said she, looking from the window.
- "Yes, lady, it is very dark, the moon set an hour ago; but do not you lean out, the night-dew is falling heavily."

Again Lolah turned to the time-piece, the hand marked that five minutes more had passed away; she looked to Stefano, but he only shook his head and muttered some indistinct sound. A little rosary of coral and of the many-coloured lavas of Vesuvius hung at her waist—she prized it, for it was her dead mother's gift to her in her earliest childhood, and it was linked with the hope and affection of other years: her hand trembled so that she could not count the beads, but she repeated the prayers, at first audibly, and then the words died away in faint murmurs; at length she herself knew not what she was uttering. Her cheek, which had been pale as the funereal marble, burned with crimson, her lips were white and apart—the fever of her mind had communicated itself to her frame. With an unsteady step she again ap-

proached the balcony—"Tell me," said she, faintly, "is there a grey streak amid those clouds? I cannot see."

"Lady, it is still dark; hist!" at this moment, a distant step was heard in the corridor; nothing but hearing made intense by anxiety could have caught it.

"Mother of God! I thank thee, it is Leoni!"

She sprang forward; but her head grew dizzy, and she leant for a moment against the table for support. Leoni entered the room, haggard with his excited vigil, his clock disordered, his rich vest left open at the throat, as if in the agitation of the gaming-table he had loosened it to give himself air; a contraction, seemingly habitual, darkened his forehead; he was young still, but the expression and colours of youth were gone. He advanced moodily and abstractedly, when his eye was caught by the appearance of Stefano, who had lost not a moment in fastening the coils of the rope to the balcony.

"Robber!" shouted he; but the hand which sought his sword was arrested by Lolah's light touch on his arm.

"Be still, for your sweet life's sake," said she, in an earnest whisper, that fieed his attention at once; "yonder faithful creature has risked his for your's; we must fly, or to-morrow dawns for you in the dungeons of the Inquisition; all is ready for flight, only come."

Leoni turned still paler; then rallying with the high courage of his race, exclaimed, "Who dares accuse me? and what is my crime?"

"That matters not," said Stefano; "my brother gave me the hint; you fly to-night, or are a prisoner in the morning. In the name of the good St. Rosslie, don't stand talking; you have lost time enough already; we have settled everything while waiting for you;—as if any good Christian ever kept such hours!" but these last words were mattered in an undertone.

"Come, my husband, there will be opportunity enough for explanation; fling this cloak round you, and follow me," said the Countess, stepping onwards.

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"Never, Lolah," rejoined Mentesiare, startled by the danger, which a conscious facing in his own heart spreholed was true; "never shall you be exposed to the hardship and danger of such a flight, for me, so worthless, so neglectful!" But she was already at the foot of the ladder.

"Come, Signor, ten minutes more, and weare logt!"

Leoni followed, though almost unconsciously; and in an instant more, Stefano was steering his boat into the hay.

"Lolah, why are you here?" hurst from him in the hitter accents of self-reproach, as he felt her head sink on his shoulder.

"Nay, my Leoni," said the low awast veice on which the once hung with such passionate love, "where should I be but where rests all my earthly happiness? with my head on your heart, Leoni love mine, I am very, very happy!"

Gently his arm enfolded the confiding and child-like form that rested upon him, and all the memory of their garly tenderness gushed into his thoughts; while she, with a wannay's engrossing devotedness, forgot everything but that her husband was once more her own.

"You must just pass for two runaways," said Stafano, "who have bribed me to row you beyond a powerful noble's reach, and who mean to stay from Palermo, till, for the daughter's sake, the lover is forgiven."

"Whither: are we going?" asked Montefiore.

"On board yonder vessel, which bears a smaggling cargo; and pray you, at the port where she stops, less no time in embacking for another. Do you remember the Marchese di Conzarga?"

"Ay, the stripling! the sweeping away of whose duests is the only instance of luck that ever awaited me at that accursed rouge et noir table."

"I doubt you owe something of your present plight to him; he is nephew to the Grand Inquisitor."

"And my husband is then the victim of his vile revenge!" cried the Countess in a tone of delight.

Stefano made no answer: the next moment they were close to the ship, and he, fastening the boat to its side by a rope, sprung on board, to be spokesman for the party. Lolah trembled as the fragile bark rocked to and fro beneath the dark stern of the vessel, from which hung a lantern, whose dim light showed what she deemed their perilous position. Leoni might have felt the beating of the heart pillowed on his own; but he had himself been so long the sole object of his thoughts, that his wife's fear, not being shared by himself, never entered his mind.

- "How provoking it is that I should have lost my last rouleau! I have not a ducat; and you hurried me so, that I had no time to bring away anything!" exclaimed he, peevishly. "What the devil terms shall we come to with these rascals, without money?"
- "I have here three rouleaux," said the Countess; "I should have brought away more gold, but for its weight—I therefore preferred my diamonds, as to their sale we must look for our future support."

A smile passed over Montefiore's face; dearly did Lolah love his smile; but now rather, a thousand times rather would she have met his darkest frown.

- "All is settled; you are to give the Captain fifty crowns on arriving in port; for the sake of his own pretty Agata, he said he would not be hard upon two young lovers:—I thought," added Stefano, in a whisper, "I might so promise, as I knew my lady had brought jewels away with her."
- "Give me the rouleaux," said the Count, "and do you take them, Stefano; and when I return I will increase them a hundredfold."
- "Keep your money, good your excellency; what I have done was in honour and love for your noble house. Keep your gold; it would little benefit me, I trow!"

Leoni rose in anger, and began hastily to ascend the side of the ship. Stefano helped the Countess, who, as with his aid she climbed the knotted ropes, whispered,

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"Take the gold, and lay it out in masses at the shrine of St. Rosalie, and this ring—my father gave it me; he will thankfully redeem it, and bless you, as his child does now."

"Come, come, Stefano, here's what will furnish you with many a merry night;" and Montefiore again pressed the money into Stefano's hand, who did not now reject it: the voice in which he muttered his good wishes was inaudible; and as he sprung into his boat, the tears of a three-year-old child stood in the eyes of the hardy rower. The Captain civilly showed the fugitives into a small cabin; and a fresh breeze filling the sails, bore them rapidly from Sicily.

Next morning, all was astonishment and consternation in Palermo; there was the palace with its splendid ornaments, its almost regal train of servants; there were the gorgeous dresses, there were the golden caskets filled with jewels and perfumes; but where were the Count and Countess? The domestics searched every room in dismay; not only were they gone, but not a vestige remained of their flight. A strange suspicion rose in every mind, pale and affrighted they crowded together, and then surmise found speech. What if the demon, for whose wealth their lord had bartered his immortal soul -what if he had exacted, at length, his fearful tribute: had he carried off his victim bodily? But then the Countess, their gentle and pious mistress, could she be involved in such awful doom?-A loud knocking at the portal broke off their discourse; every one hurried to the door-to admit the officers of the Inquisition. All search was fruitless, all inquiry vain. The palace was confiscated, and its rich furniture sold; the Marchese di Montefiore was summoned to appear on a charge of sorcery; he came not to answer the accusation. and sentence of oultawry was passed against him. A thousand wild rumours were afloat, which finally merged in one-that unearthly retribution had been exacted for unearthly riches. Yet there were two in Palermo who knew the truth; the father of Lolah, who died shortly after, a lonely and brokenhearted man; and Stefane—but he kept the secret as one of life and death; and when he perished in a sterm at sea, it was buried with him is the deep and fathomies waters.

But now to return to our fugitives. At the first port they towehed, they re-embarked, and finally landed at Marseilles; a small but lovely cottage on the sea-shore received them, an olive plantation encircled the house, and the Provence rose looked in at the casements. The far plains were covered with heath and thyme on one side, and on the other was the sea, where the rich vessels of the merchants seemed to sail to and fro for ever. Fear and fatigue had severely tried a frame so featl as that of Lolah; and her husband's apprehension on her account for a time recalled his love:-perhaps they are more inseparable than we are ready to admit. Leoni felt that he was the only link between Lolah and life-his care the barrier between her and death: at length his gentle watchfulness was rewarded by the smile returning to her lip, and the rose to her cheek. Lolah thought she was very happy; in truth, from her birth, nature and fortune had been at variance: her delicate health unfitted her for either crowds or late hones -a constitutional fimidity made her shrink from strangers -she had neither the talents which require, nor the spirits which enjoy an enlarged sphere of action: the affectionate memotorry of her present life was just suited to her.

Net so to her husband, who soon desired more activity, more variety, more excitement: a thousand times did he ask himself of what avail was his boundless wealth, if he made it not the minister of pleasure? Every evening that he marked the sea redden beneath the setting sun, he vowed it should be the last. At length he resolved on leaving their cottage; and, after travelling for a few days, they settled in a superb châtesu near Lyons. Lolah trembled at the magnificence which again surrounded them. Once she ventured to remonstrate on their lavish expenditure; but Leoni only laughed, and said, "You will not find here the miserable superstition of the

Sicilians; and great part of my, wealth was placed abroad. First, we will dazzle these provincials, and then proceed to Paris."

In fact, Leoni seared yet to enter that most caravanserailike capital; he wished to be somewhat forgotten of his countrymen, before he risked meeting with them. Half Lyons was soon collected at the chateau: what was splendour to Leoni, unless it were envied and admired? Perhaps the secret of his character was, that he was a very vain man, and yet had nothing in himself whereby that vanity was gratified; this forced him upon external resources. Again he delighted in bewildering by his magnificence, and astonishing by its ex-But in this enjoyment Lolah took no part; in this new display of riches, she saw but a confirmation of the suspicions which had driven them from Palermo: and Leoni-to whom, in spite of his selfishness, her devotion, her uncomplaining abandonment of home, friends, name, for his sake, had endeared her more and more, and who felt that Lolah was his only link with the past, the sole remembrance of his early and happy youth-Leoni felt bitterly the barrier that doubt drew between his wife and himself. He was mortified to think. that his very power degraded him in her eyes; that she confounded him with the alchymists and sorcerers, whom he despised as they were despised in that military and feudal age. A thousand times he was on the point of revealing his secret, and then again the memory of the secrecy so mysteriously enjoined arose within him. A visitor at their fetes, a passerby on the road, who caught sight of the youthful couple, would have envied their happiness; but whosoever could have looked within on the hidden depths of their troubled minds, would have seen fear, discontent, sorrow for the past, and misgiving for the future.

One night there was a superb entertainment; the Countess presided, pale and melancholy; the Count, weary of himself, and therefore of his guests, secretly compared them with the brilliant groups that had assembled in his palazzo at Palermo,

and thought how little his provincial set were worthy of the cost and taste bestowed upon them. In reality, display had lost its novelty, and consequently its charm in his eyes. The evening had not half passed away, when Lolah was astonished by his coming up to her and whispering, "For Heaven's sake, find some excuse for dismissing these people! Illness will do; for I am sure you look pale enough."

She might have re-echoed her husband's words, for he himself looked wild and haggard. Still, it was near midnight when their guests dispersed; and Leoni-on returning from conducting la Presidente de Lanville, always the latest of the the late, to her huge family coach—silently approached one of the windows, and stepping out upon the terrace, stood as if absorbed in the lovely view—and lovely indeed it was. Below, was a smooth turf, which sloped down to a lake; whose surface reflected the moonshine broken and tremulous; the moon herself was rising on the other side of the château, and so was invisible; but her light lay silvery on the grass, and lent a softness, sweeter even than colour, to manyshaped beds, which were filled with flowers. In the middle of the garden was a fountain; to a certain height the water shot up in a bright and straight column, suddenly the stream divided and came down in a glittering shower to the marble basin below, and the falling of this fountain was the only sound that broke the perfect stillness. A quiet step approached, a soft hand was laid on his arm, and Lolah whispered, "Is it not beautiful?" How often will the lips frame some indifferent question, when the heart is full of the most important!

"Will you then regret to leave it?" said Leoni, as they wandered through the maze of odoriferous flower-pots, "for we must go to-morrow."

Lolah gazed upon his face, but words died on her lips.

"That wearisome Madame de Lanville," continued he, "entertained me this evening with her delight that she should soon have a worthy guest to introduce to me; for that in a

week's time the Count Gonzaga, the nephew of the great cardinal, would spend a few days at her house, on his way to the south of France; and she was so sure I should find him a charming acquaintance. Plague on the old simpleton, and the Count too! what cursed chance brings him here?"

"My Leoni, why should you fear him?" murmured Lolah.

"Fear him, nonsense! But it would be very disagreeable to have the old and foolish story which banished us from Palermo, set abroad in Lyons:" and, lost in gloomy meditation, he sank on a carved stone seat by the lake. For a moment the Countess stood irresolute by his side—suddenly dropping on one knee, she leant her beautiful head on his arm, and watching his countesance with those eloquent eyes which had never looked upon him but in love, said, in a low pleading voice,

"Leoni mine, my heart has never had one thought hidden from you, how can you bear to shut yours so utterly from me?"

He made her no answer except by kissing her eyes, as if he might not see and resist their eloquent pleading: but his young wife had gained courage—the worst was over—and her very fondness, which made his anger such a thing of fear, now urged her to endeavour to persuade, if she could not convince. She implored him to say what was the secret of his wealth; to justify its possession, if possible—if not, to fling it from him: what lot could there be in life which she would not be ready to share with him? Had his wealth made him happy? oh, no! it had sown division between them; it had exiled him from his own land; it was now about to force him to become a wanderer again.

"I tell you, my beloved husband, this secret is to me even as death; I kneel to the Madonna, and my thoughts are not with prayer; in society I shrink from every eye with a vague but ever-present fear—a word, a look, sends the colour from my cheek, and curdles the life-blood at my heart; and yet I know notwhat I dread: and sleep, oh sleep is very terrible! for then, Leoni, you tell me what it is death to hear, and I start

from my pillow—but when I waken, I disbelieve your guilt:
—you guilty, Leoni? oh, no, no!" and again her head sank,
while the moonlight fell on her pale cheek, and eyes glistening with earnestness and tears.

Weak and self-indulgent, accustomed to yield in all things, to the impulse of the moment, Leoni was a very unfit person to be intrusted with a mystery and a secret: he sufficed not to himself; he felt weary of his unshared thoughts; and at this moment he was irresolute—he would even have wished to throw all the responsibility of decision on the fragile and gentle creature by his side.

In the deep stillness of that moonlit midnight he told her all; his voice died in silence, which was interrupted by a faint shriek from his wife; she pointed to the lake, but strong terror made her speechless—a faint silvery outline of a form was seen in the distant air; it came nearer, and a shadow fell dark upon the wave; a stately and lovely female slowly advanced across the water, which yielded not beneath her shining feet. The flashing of her radiant eyes fell upon the culprit—she raised her hand, whereon shone the starry talisman as it shone when she bade the spirits give him wealth unbounded and at a wish. She beckoned Leoni. A power was on him which forced him to obey-he sprang towards the lake—he sank below the surface—twice he emerged from the bright waves, again they closed over his head, and the moon shone upon one unbroken line of light. The strange and beautiful being gazed on the spot with a look of horror; she wrung her hands as if in the helplessness of despair—a low cry came upon the wind, and its mysterious utterer had disappeared. An influence stronger than even fear or love had riveted Lolah like a statue to the place; but as that figure melted into air, a terrible life returned to her-she rushed towards the lake, and with one wild shriek plunged into its depths.

Next morning the birds were singing among the boughs, the bees were gathering their early honey amid the flowers,

the sun had turned the lake into a sheet of gold-when the servants were drawn to the spot by a light-blue scarf floating on the waters; they knew it was what their mistress had worn the night before. The silver flowers embroidered on it, glittering in the sunshine, first caught the eye; assistance was procured, and the bodies were soon found. The wreath of white lilies yet bound the raven tresses of Lolah, some of whose lengths had become entangled round the neck of her They parted them not, but carried them to the château. Ere noon, every inhabitant of Lyons had mourned over their youthful, but marble-like beauty. None knew their history: none ever solved the mystery of their fatebut there were many affectionate hearts that grew sorrowful for their sake-and kind hands buried them together in the same grave.

THE ENCHANTRESS.

One morning a marble urn was found upon their tomb, though none could tell who placed it there. On it was exquisitely carved a veiled female figure, with hands clasped as if in prayer, and head bowed down as if weeping; she was kneeling at the foot of the Cross: a scroll below was graven with one single word—Submission!

THE SHOOTING STAR.

BY LORD NUGENT.

It was my meaning to return, late as it was, across the bog, over by "Phelim's Rest," and so reach home before my mother should wake. And what was "Phelim's Rest," and who was I, and my mother at home and alone, and I out still, and it so late?—And is there another bog in the whole south, be it where it may, from Wexford and the golden vale of Kilkenny, to the westermost extremity of Ireland and of Europe entirely, that it wouldn't be better crossing on a dark November's night, than exactly that which lay convenient to my poor mother's bit of a farm? And "Phelim's Rest," in. the middle of it, had been, many's the long day since, the strong place of some old chieftain (or worse may be), where he used to hold himself secure from all comers, save and except them he'd like, by reason there was only one path, none of the widest, and not much of a path neither, leading from the "Rest" both ways out to the edge of the bog. path was crooked and broke, with big stones here and there, a sort of causeway like; and you'd sometimes seem to yourself to be rather going backward than forward, seeing the turns of it, and each side brown shaking bog, and big holes of water, and worse luck's his who would get into them. my opinion that, in his day, and before the stone causeway was there, it was all brown together, only patches of green or of water, and that none but he and his men would know the firm ground at all to go across. And the "Rest" is but a

small little place, on which once stood a grand tower, or such as that, the old stone wall of which still is in parts five or six feet above the heap, and on one side a little gable for his bell; and the stones of the upper part of the tower, such as hadn't gone to make the causeway, had tumbled round the foot, and made it almost a sort of island of natural rock to look at it, standing up gray in the dark and watery flat. And there it was, as a boy, I'd be mightily given to sit of a morning, and through the day too, and a good bit of the evening, by reason it was the shortest way to the town, when I'd go for my mother of an errand. And there I'd lie in the sun on the stones and soft moss, or sit dabbling my heels in the square pools that the turf-cutters made, with my bit of whatever it was that I'd eat; and I'd glory in a throw at the wild fowl, who'd come (bold birds as they were) to quarrel with me for my seat and my bit: and it was by my staying out so late (and because, when the water lay high on the bog, and the evenings were dark and dirty, and seeing it was not always a sure thing to find the path rightly), that my poor mother would be uneasy; and sometimes when I'd come home, wet and cold, she'd be very mad with me, poor soul! God rest her! for she loved me greatly. And often, when she'd fault me for leaving her to go sit alone among the stones and the wild birds, she'd talk of my father, who had left her alone with me in the world, and she'd cry over me, graceless as I was.-For I was the only son of my mother,-and she was a widow! Oh my poor mother! and I loved you too!-And. I believe at times you knew it !-- And, oh that I had you with me now, old as you would be, and helpless, but for me, and all the dearer too for that, and I would tell you that indeed indeed I loved you all along, and that your care of me should never make a sore heart between us again; and I'd never cause you uneasiness, but sit by you, and comfort and cherish you. But that is past and gone now!

Well, and I grew up to be a clean proper fellow, and it was my own birthday, and there was a wedding in the town,

and I wished greatly to be there, and my poor mother knew it right well; and, the why I didn't know, but she was more than ever eager with me that night to stay with her, though I told her I'd pass my birthday night with her until she'd he going to bed; but that the boys would be wanting me at the town, and that there'd be grand doings long after that. And true for me it was : the bridegroom had been, many's the day, my fishing companion, and besides, the beide's mother was her own gossip, and the piper was her own foster-brother; and why wouldn't she let me go? And there was Anty Doeley too—and I knew she'd be there, the creature—and I'd he making sweet eyes at Anty. But it was all one! my poor mother, besides a wish expressed faintly and mildly enough, when she went to bed left her command and her blessing on me that I wouldn't go. But how could my going hurt my pour mother? So I sees her to bed, and the light well out, and off I slinks out of the window, not to be heard, like a bold undutiful blackguard, and across the bog by the sweet moon, meaning to be back before my mother was up. Well, all this was very well, and though the rains had made the water lie thigh in places on the turf, and over some parts of the cameway too, I knew the track, and the sky was bright altogether; and I spent my heur or two just as I'd wish, and no much harm neither; only I was disobeying and deceiving my poor mother.

It was a good two in the morning when I put forward to come back. Alone I was; for nobody's way but mine lay over the bag. The morning had set in cloudy and dask, and not a blink in the whole heavens, but a small rain in my face; and I was thinking more of Anty than should be, seeing the danger was all before me, and nothing to be discerned at the mose's length of me any more than if I had been stark natural blind. I missed the track that led to the causeway. Young I was, and because nothing could hurt the like of me, I pushed on over the quaking scraw-lugger, thinking, sure enough, I should, by and by, come to the hard. Every step took me

deeper into the mischief; and out of my knowledge, and smong appearances new and strange to me. I was bothered among bog holes, I tumbled over turf-clumps, till at last all grew soft, and it was enough for me to keep this side smothering depth, by reason, I was fairly bogged. I sunk if I stood still; I was more lost if I tried to get on: I knew no more than the dead where I was, or how to return. ached with the labour, and I cried piteously—the wind blustered and howled mournfully round me—the green plovers. blown from the roost, were borne before it off their wings. sibbering and squeaking across my very face—and the black clouds were driving, as it seemed to me, close over my head. A few moments more, and I was throat-deep in water. I thought of my mother!-of her strong love for me-and a mischief on me-and the many proofs I'd be daily receiving of it; I knew her agony if I'd never return, or be again heard of-and, oh! I hated myself, and was in despair. I looked wildly up to heaven, and prayed: "Oh Lord, I am a sinner! But my mother, my poor mother!" I paused, holding on by my hands to the edge of the hole where I was, and my heart beat quick and strong, for it seemed a small spot grew suddenly light in the vast black heavens, and a shooting star darted across; and oh! its ever blessed gleam lighted up for a moment one big white stone, which I could not mistake; it was not above twenty good paces from me-I struggled towards it—the ground grew firmer, long life to it,—it was one of the causeway, -and I reached "Phelim's Rest." But the clouds were as dark again as ever! and here I could but .. sit till first daydawn, two, three, cold wretched hours, giving God thanks; but my heart breaking to think if my mother would wake and call me.

I reached home, oh! strongly hoping that she 'had been spared all. But I was soon sensible the house-door was open, and a light in the bit of a kitchen. I saw through the window my mother up and drest, sure enough, and boiling the milk, at that unreasonable hour, and a suit of my

clothes warming at the fire. She was very pale. Her eye was often turned towards the door, and then upwards; and then she'd droop her head again, and turn my clothes; and then bend her eyes to the fire, and clasp her hands for me. Hard enough it was to bear to see that! I was soon with my arms round her neck: "My child-my pet-my darling--" she paused, " be comforted, all's right now--I've been very anxious-I guessed where you were, and how it would be; it was very dark for you, and, helpless as I am, I had once the thought to go out to you; but I did a better part-I prayed; for without Him there is no help. and with Him there is no danger. I watched at the door till near three, and the wind blew cold upon my heart, and I could see nothing, and hear nothing, but the blast and dashing rain; and it was that night, sixteen years ago, you first drew breath, and God knows how it might then be with you. I knelt on the ground in my agony, and said, 'Lord, who gaved'st him life, spare him, and he will be thy servant!' Oh, my boy, I am not presumptuous! but just then a bright shooting star streamed across, and it almost seemed to tell me that there was hope, and that heaven was not shut to my prayers, or to my child!"

I'll not take it on me to say whether myself grew better or wiser for that, but I am sure I ought to;—or whether I was more dutiful to my mother; alas! I hope so, for a sadder night it was mine to see within three years after. But that night her son never can describe—no, nor think of—except to my own self.

Shortly after my poor mother's death I had offers from a commercial house in Cork to which my father had been well known; and before the year came round it was determined to send me out on business to their correspondents at Lisbon. I took my passage in a small merchant brig that had been built for privateering on the Spanish Main, going out in ballast, ill appointed enough, and mighty short-handed—the captain, three men, and a boy, over and above myself.

But what of that? Fresh to the world, and moreover proud. to be sure, and thinking greatly of what I'd got on hand and I so young, what could a wild Irish boy feel but a bounding heart, on the bold wide ocean for the first time? I set to work to take my place in the ship—I took my watch, and went aloft, and kept a dead reckoning, and took daily a bit of an observation too for my own self. Well, all went mighty well, and we made the Rock, and were well off the Tagus before sun-down on the fourteenth day. The wind being fair, and plenty of it, the captain was anxious to save his tide up that night: but not knowing the river, and wanting a pilot in, we bore up to a sail that was coming close-hauled from the southward, and apparently standing in. The stranger, a Portuguese ship, heavy laden, seemed not to like our cut, and went about, carrying on, and putting herself before the wind. Well, we knew we could go two to her one; and it was taking us mighty little out of our course, and we could not get in without a pilot at any rate, and so we only luffed a point or two, not to fall to leeward of our chase, and hand over hand we were coming up with her. In less than two hours we were within hail, and so near in to the land too, and it being a shoal coast, and the wind coming strong from the north-west, and it growing very dark, it was only having her-and a large ship she was too-within us, that gave us confidence to stand on. Suddenly she luffed up, nearly across our bows, as if going about; but she merely braced her head-yards round, then took in top-gallant sails, and, keeping her main topsail back to the mast, lay at our mercy. We hailed her as we passed, but no answer we got but a dead silence. So, bringing the brig up in the wind as soon as we could, to heave her to, convenient to the Portuguee, we held a council what was to be done. We had but one boat, and she was on deck, and a nasty, little, round, short, crazy jolly-boat she was as you'd wish to see. So we lowered her, and, by reason we were short handed, and it blowing strong, the

captain wouldn't spare only a man, and the small boy, and me that wasn't good for much. So, shoving off, I steered for the Portuguee, whom we could now see but mighty little of, for the distance had increased greatly between the two vessels since we first hove to. Well, we had got a musket in the bottom of the boat for a signal in case of accident, and then the brig was to hoist a light. By the time we had pulled fairly out of sight of her, and the night now pitch dark, it was our opinion we could not catch a wink of the other, and it was a bare chance where she might be. Then, for the first time, spoke the small boy. " And may be," said he, " the Portuguee guessed we were lowering away our boat, and thinking, after we had shoved off, that the captain with his boat adrift could hardly do less than wait to pick her up, may be the Portuguee has made sail again." And faith this sounded reasonable too. And, furthermore, and besides that, it being at best beyond our knowledge where the Portuguee was, we thought we might as well pull back. At this time, I felt the cold greatly about the legs of me, and, putting my hand down, oh murder! if the boat wasn't half way up to the thwarts in water. "Why, what on earth is this?" cried I. "May be," says the small boy, "your honour, and the captain, and Pat, and Flinn, and myself, and Ben that's here, forgot to ship the plug, and. may be it's out." And sure enough it was. And, because I was sensible of a hole as big as my thumb through the boat's bottom, it stood to reason that she should be filling. "Short, times for thinking," said 1; "it's my opinion it's a good season for making a bit of a signal. But, worse and worse, there was the musket where we'd put it, over head and ears, lock and all, poor thing, in good blue water on the boat's Nothing remained but to pull for the bare life; and what if I'd bale with my hat, and may be they'll be thinking on board something's wrong, and they'll show a light, and then," says I, "I'll see them." Well, by the very reason of the boat's pulling heavy, and a swell, and Ben catching a

crab too, crack goes the grummet his oar pulled against, short off in the mortice! and there we were, one oar, and we spinning round, and filling, and nothing else! Now, to be sure, all seemed as good as over with us at any rate. And is there any one with only nineteen years upon him, with death, inevitable, imminent death, staring him in the face, every moment nearer and more grim, but would feel it hard to have lived to be thus lost in his youth, with all his hopes before him? So thought the poor small boy in the bows, for he wept aloud, and called on his mother. Poor boy! she was far away. But had nobody a mother but he? Oh yes! Though mine was dead and gone, she'd be with me still: often in my joy, when I'd wish for her to share it: and always in pain and sorrow, for they were a-kin to the thoughts of having lost her. And, oh! that night, when I was alone on the wide, tumbling, unrelenting swell, in a round, short, crazy jolly-boat, with one oar, and no plug to bless ourselves, and two poor wretches whose company would be no comfort in drowning, and the more I baled the more I couldn't keep her from filling,—it was just that night twelvemonth—but why did I remember that it was just a year ago that night that I lost her, when I thought to be sure we were so soon to meet again? Oh. it was that I was thankful she was dead and gone, not to mourn for me! But I said nothing, for I wouldn't have considered that handsome by any means to the rest of us; but I looked once round before I'd give all up. Was that the brig's light? Oh, no! it was a shooting star! -and I don't know what it was, or why, but I felt something glance warm across my heart. It was but a foolish shooting-star, after all; but I set the spot where it fell. And, hurrah! if Ben, who had been working all along with his knife, like a heathen who never thought of death, hadn't got the mortice-hole clear, and new shipped the grummet. So we cheered to keep our hearts up, and got something like steerage-way on the boat once more. But seeing it was all one which way we put her head, I steered her straight course for where the star had shot into the wave—I don't know why—and baled double tides. And poor comfort though this was, I thought I'd see what would come of it, and hurrahed them to give way stoutly, for we might at least be pulling in towards shore.

Two dreary hours more, and still working hard, when a streak of gray morning light began to dawn narrow and cheerless on the horizon. Was it cheerless I said? no, blessings on it! for as the dark curtain drew up which for hours had been closed on the very souls of us, I thought I could see a sail on the black heaving horizon, against the opening sky, right a-head. My eyes ached, being fixed so long; I closed them for a wink, and then, clear and plain, there was the brig, hove to as we had left her, and not a lantern had the thief shown all the time. cheered again loud and lustily. And now it was indeed I wept amain; and the poor boy shrieked like a young thing catching sight of life again. Even Ben, the creature, dropped his head as if he felt more than he'd be speaking of.

It was long, long before we could be seen pulling over the swell, though often I'd wave my handkerchief high. But, at last, oh glory! we saw her fill her sails and come right down to us. And she picked us up just as the jollyboat's ugly gunnel was down to the water's edge.

And here I am, five years after. I have led a rough life since, and am like to do,—for I'm captain's clerk to a West-Indiaman. But never, never from that hour have I seen a shooting-star but I'm the better for it, for then I bless heaven for my life, and my poor mother for her prayer when I was struggling in the bog-hole near "Phelim's Rest." Am I superstitious?—I believe not.——

THERESE.

BY SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

It was a situation for an artist! Therese on the one hand, with a neck and face of scarlet, her brow elevated, and her eye flashing with astonishment and indignation; Count Theodore on the other, the picture of disappointment and humiliation, blended with a slight expression of anger—and all about trying to snatch a kiss, from the lady Julie's maid, when the Lady Julie herself would have given one to the count!

But the maid, if not as noble as her mistress, was a thousand times more reserved. She was a thousand times more interesting too. Her forehead was beautiful; Lavater would have etched it for the outline express of dignity, intellectuality, and delicacy. The rest of her features corresponded with it, and combined to form a countenance where extraordinary force of character was conspicuous; yet all was exquisitely feminine. It was not a face to be met with every day, or in every city. And what kind of a figure should one expect to find in company with such a face? It should have height, fullness, tenuity, proportion, should it not? It had. Nothing exceeding or coming short. Nor would one be surprised if grace and stateliness, in carriage and in gait, were the attributes of such a figure. In fact, sitting, standing, or walking, one would never have inferred Therese's occupation from Therese; and every one, especially Count Theodore, wondered how she became the maid of the Lady Julie-though countesses have sometimes very lady-like maids.

The first time the count saw Therese, she was assisting

the Lady Julie to adjust some ornaments for a head-dress which the countess intended to wear at a ball, and he took her for some noble friend of her ladyship's-a mistake which the fair scion of an illustrious stock corrected with more zeal than complacency. The Lady Julie could not brook the affront which Nature sometimes puts on letters patent of nobility, by giving the attributes of rank to those who have no business with the title. The count spoke no more of Therese, but his thoughts did not run the less upon her. If, formerly, like other admirers of the countess, he visited her dressing-room once or twice a week, now he was a constant attendant of it. 'Twas astonishing how rapidly he became initiated into the mysteries of the toilet. It was like a thing of intuition! Pin, comb, ornament-whatever it was --- was ready for the hand of the fair officiating priestess, and, on the instant that it was wanted, placed there; or, if dropped, picked up and presented to her with that alert and watchful service which one may have for love, but never can purchase for money.

There are scholars, however, who, if they improve in one thing, are sure to go back in another; and such a one was the count. If he had all his thoughts about him at the countess's toilet, they seemed to desert him the moment its duties were over: he was then the dullest man alive. surprising, too, how absent he became all at once. day but he left his hat, or his gloves, or his cane, or something or another, in her ladyship's dressing-room, and had to step back for it. On such occasions he would accost Therese with all the deference that he would pay to her mistress, and request her to look for such or such a thing; acknowledging her compliance with a bow and a respectful pressure of the hand. He had now forgotten his gloves, and Therese tried in vain to find them. "Perhaps," she said, "she had removed them with some of the countess's things into an adjoining room," and thither she was going to search for them; but the count could not think of giving her such trouble, and

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eaught her by the arm—not because it was as round, and soft, and silky, as an arm of fair flesh and of the Medician mould would be—but to prevent her; yet when he did prevent her, still he relaxed not his hold, though she gently tried to disengage herself. "My lord, let me go," said Therese; "your lordship is in want of your gloves." The count's eyes might have told her that he cared not a franc for his gloves. "Therese!" said he; "sweet Therese!" and caught her by the other arm. She was on the point of remonstrating, when her lips were stopped by the pressure of the count's! The freedom was resented as soon as taken. In one and the same moment she released herself, and flung the young nobleman from her.

Now the Lady Julie had rather more than the ordinary penetration of her sex. She remarked that the count had not conceived half so strong a passion for her pianoforte or her work-table, as for her toilet. This induced her to consider what appendage of the latter could constitute its superior attraction; and that busy body, Memory, reminded her of the expressive countenance, the well-formed neck and beautiful arms, with their graceful and varied movements, which her tell-tale mirror represented to her every morning officiating behind her chair; and she came very speedily to the conclusion, that it was at least a doubtful matter, whether the pleasure which the count took in frequenting her dressing-room arose chiefly from solicitude about herself, or from anxiety to assist her attendant. She had a sufficient share of art too. She knew that the way to see everything was to affect to see nothing. She was as frank and unconcerned as possible; and although her watchful mirror gave her frequent note of occasional slight collisions and entanglements between the count's fingers and those of Therese, as he would assist her in placing an artificial flower, or adjusting the set of a curl; yet she never allowed herself to betray it, but chatted on with him with her accustomed sprightliness and complacency. In short, repeated observation convinced her that she was

indebted to her attendant for the increased interest which the count took, of late, in her toilet. No wonder, then, if, his fits of absence struck her, and if she suspected that he taxed the remissness of his memory more severely than it merited. Was it not an excuse to return to her dressing-room, where of course he would find Therese alone, who remained there to arrange her ornaments and apparel? She resolved to satisfy herself upon this point the very next opportunity, and that opportunity was the present one. The count, as I said, had forgotten his gloves for the twentieth time, and must return for them. She allowed a minute or two to elapse, followed him, and found him and Therese in the situation I described. "What is the matter?" inquired she, in an imperative and rather angry tone, leaving it optional for the count or Therese to answer. "Nothing," replied the former, extremely confused; " only I have taxed Therese with having mislaid my gloves, and, behold! here they are in my pocket!" The lady looked at the count, whose face and manner ill supported the veracity of what he had asserted, and then turned towards Therese, in whose demeanour there was not the slightest change—except that the mantling of her cheek and neck had somewhat subsided. There is a power in native dignity which ever transcends the influence of mere human distinctions. Men may class men as they please; the classification of nature will still be the predominant one-that whose claim shall be felt, whether it be acknowledged or not -to the weight of which no pride of stately lineage, no title, whether by inheritance or gift, can oppose an equivalent counterpoise. The self-esteem of the countess bowed before the presence of her offended maid. She glanced at the count, and saw that the proudest young nobleman in France was in the same predicament as herself. He looked as though he had forgotten that he had been born to a title. "Come, count," said she, making an effort to recover herself, "the carriage waits;" and Therese was left alone.

The count was the favoured admirer of the Lady Julie-

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not because he was the handsomest and most accomplished young man in Paris, but on account of his rank, in which he had no competitor; and though he had not yet proposed for her in form, yet was he generally looked upon as the intended of the noble fair one. Daily for the last two months and more had she expected the question: still it never came, and now seemed farther off than ever. It was clear that his allegiance to her had been shaken. Sitting before her mirror, the countess beheld nothing but its lovely mistress, until something peculiar in the tone of the count's voice, when he occasionally addressed an observation to Therese, struck her, and directed her attention towards the latter. She now began to draw comparisons, and the result startled her. She saw that the countenance of her maid infinitely excelled her own in that most touching of all things-expression. She examined it feature by feature and was disconcerted at finding that where she searched for a fault she invariably lit upon a perfection. From the face, she passed to the neck and arms of her attendant: she could not correct their symmetry by that of her own—she would have given her own in exchange for Therese was in the act of searching in a riband, which bound up her hair, for a pin which she had temporarily stuck in it: the countess marked the rich swell of the graceful limb as it was affected by the motion; she impulsively placed her own in the same attitude—dropped it again -and encountering her own eyes in the mirror, beheld herself the very image of mortification and spleen. Subsequent observation, as we stated, convinced her that the count had anticipated her in appreciating the attractions of her maid; and now the incident of the morning had set it beyond a doubt, that the countess had a rival where least of all she would have expected to find one.

Few sentences were interchanged between her and the count during their ride; in the course of which they descended from the chariot to walk for a time in the royal gardens—which one of the numerous admirers of the lady entered

with them. This gentleman's arm the countess took, dropping the count's with a slight excuse that she wanted to speak with his rival, and walked with him the greater part of the time alone; yet the count neither looked hurt nor sad, but bowed with the greatest suavity when the other took his leave, and smilingly offered his arm to the countess again. He would not have borne a slight so patiently a couple of months ago. The interest which he took in her was evidently on the decline; and to Therese she was indebted for its waning. Therese must quit her service; but what excuse could she make for dismissing her?—She would consider.

She was right. The count had indeed conceived an ardent passion for Therese. The countess he had never truly loved. She was the reigning beauty of Paris, and he, of course, became one of her train. His rank made him the most eligible of all her admirers for the honour of her hand; and hence, as I remarked, the preference with which she regarded him-for the ruling passion of the countess's breast was ambition. The count's vanity was flattered, and more than once or twice was he on the point of solliciting her to accept him; but a doubt as to the real state of her affections, as well as want of confidence in the nature of his own feelings, still withheld him from taking the final step. Such was the errand he came upon, the day he first saw Therese; but this time it was the appearance of the fair stranger-whose dependant situation near his mistress was the last thing he should have divined—that prevented him from executing it. He went home that evening earlier than usual, and throwing himself into a chair to debate the important question-to marry, or not to marry?—was surprised at finding that he could thing of nothing but the countenance and figure of Therese. Do what he would, she was still before him. "Were the countess like Therese," exclaimed the count to himself, "I would decide in a moment!" and from that moment the question was decided. The countess never could be his!

One or two little incidents also convinced him that he had made an impression upon her heart; nay, the officious kindness of one of those numerous individuals who busy themselves about every one's affairs but their own, had let him into the secret that her heart was in the possession of another, whom she had slighted upon the prospect of a more illustrious alliance. Still he frequented the countess's toilet; but now it was for the sake of Therese; the exquisite grace of whose every movement increased the impression which the first sight of her had made upon him. The varied expression of her countenance, beaming with intelligence such as he had never remarked in a female face before; the modesty, the blandness that sat in it; the tone of her voice, whose sweetness sent a thrill through him whenever she spoke; her form, the symmetry of whose rich mould seemed to acquire enhancement from examination; all convinced him that she was a being calculated to constitute the felicity of the man who should possess her; and he sighed to become that man. But did the count hitherto ever dream of marrying The count was a man of honour, but a Therese ?—No. man of warm affections; and it is frequently the fatality of such men to yield to strong excitement, and to allow the growth of wishes, the means of gratifying which they never take into consideration, till the ascendancy of passion has become almost too powerful for resistance.

That day the count declined dining with the Lady Julie. She had a party, and the idea of company was insupportable to him. He promised, however, to look in, during the course of the evening, as there was to be a ball, and his presence could not on any account be dispensed with. No sooner had the count taken his leave, then he felt like a man who, from bondage, is suddenly restored to liberty. He wished for solitude; he hurried out of Paris, and in the course of a couple of hours found himself in his château; which, as the season was winter, he had left in the keeping of one or two domestics. He was now alone—free from the chance of interrup-

tion, and at leisure to indulge in his meditations, of which Therese was the theme. 'Twas clear that with Therese there was no chance of success for a dishonourable passion, and his own soul revolted at the thought of entertaining one. She had a heart that could be touched-should it not be already so-but it was fortified all round with mind and principle. What was to be done? He had but one of two alternatives-to give her up, or to offer her his hand! The latter was impossible!" and when he turned to the former, "That was impossible too!" He passed from chamber to chamber in a state of indescribable perplexity and indecision, and he was now in the banqueting-room. 'Twas a glorious apartment! He walked with a stately pace to the end of it, turned round, and folding his arms as he drew himself up, surveyed the painted and richly carved and gilded ceiling; the massive marble columns that supported it; the sides, that were lined with broad and lofty mirrors; the doors, of the costliest wood, inlaid with gold; and the furniture, corresponding in elegance and magnificence! His soul felt a movement of pride: 'twas but momentary—Therese stood before him, and she looked more stately than that stately room! Hurried was the step with which he paced it back again, and impatient the movement with which he flung open the portal as he went out of it.

The banqueting-room opened upon the gallery of paintings. There were his ancestors, male and female, for twenty generations. One of the latter had been ennobled for her beauty; which was so uncommon that it made an impression upon the heart of Count Reginald, fifth of the line, who raised the fair one to his bed, though descended of a plebeian stock. This portrait Count Theodore was always fond of contemplating, it was so beautiful; and now he drew a chair and sat down before it. It had lost its effect upon him! In a minute, though his eyes were still fixed upon the canvas, he was poring upon the features of Therese! She was fairer than Count Reginald's wife! His eye fell upon a table that stood within his reach: the book of the family tree was lying

on it: he took it, and opened it. There was Count Reginald with half a score of titles; and, opposite to him, "Therese l'Estrange," without a single one. The fairest female in his line was not mistress of a drop of noble blood! Strange thoughts passed through Count Theodore's mind as he replaced the book of the family tree, and rose from the chair. The next portrait caught his eye: it was that of the sixth Count Reginald, the son of Therese l'Estrange by her lordthe bravest, the most generous and accomplished of the count's ancestors. His face was his mother's, save that the lineament's were stamped with the richest impress of manhood. Count Theodore smiled at the stately attitudes in which some of his more immediate ancestors were drawn, as, walking out of the gallery, he turned his back upon them, pronouncing twice or thrice the name of Therese l'Estrange.-"And why," said he, as he descended the spacious staircase, " why should not another Therese be grafted on the family tree?"

The count entered his study; he took up a book: 'twas the biography of great and eminent men. He carelessly turned over the leaves without any intention of reading it. "The Duke de—" caught his eye. The duke's father had been a simple mercer in an obscure village in the province of Normandy; and the son, by his talents, courage, and virtues, had raised himself to the highest rank of nobility. His descendant, in the third generation, was now the most dissolute character in Paris! "So," said count Theodore; "the ancestor of the Duke de — was indebted to his virtues for his nobility: they found him a plebeian, and they made him a duke. A pity that with his title he could not have transmitted to his posterity the worth that was the reason of his obtaining it!"

The count took up his hat, went out, and wandered into his grounds; and presently found himself in the neighbour-hood of the village chapel. He was close to the burying-ground, where stood the mausoleum of his ancestors. Opening a wicket, he approached it, and read over the names of

the silent inmates. The lofty and ample chateau, with its spiral turrets, lay full in sight: he leaned against the last home of his forefathers, and gazed upon the gorgeous mansion. Nineteen of its successive lords were narrowly housed within the building, whose monumental wall was supporting him. He felt as if everything was unstable-as if there was nothing which he had a hold of-as if the solid earth he stood upon was about to vanish from under his feet. The idea of the one Great Cause came strong upon him, and he felt an awe at the thought of the infinitude of the wisdom and goodness of that Cause. And the final day occurred to him; and he imagined Therese floating up as a bright emanation of that Cause returning unpolluted to its source. His soul was humbled and soothed. He looked at the chateau: he thought that virtue was statelier, more lofty and more spacious.-"A second Therese might be grafted on the family tree."

He returned back to Paris, and dressed for the evening. 'Twas late when he entered the ball-room. A set of dances had been just concluded, and the company were in groupssome walking, some sitting, and some standing. In one of the latter he observed the Duke de B-, the Marquis R-, and three or four other noblemen. They were stationed at the entrance of the apartment. "Certainly the finest woman in the room!" exclaimed the Marquis R-. "Beyond comparison," added the Duke de B-. "That air of ease and grace, which indeed are things inseparable—at least the former from the latter-is the result of the most admirable proportion! You have the oval in her face, exact as a mathematician could define it; and mark how her features harmonize with it! Her waist is the circle: I would defy the compass to correct it! But take the entire figure—its outline—how richly and flowingly it undulates !- There is woman in every curve of it. If she is the countess's attendant, why then Nature has modelled a princess, and left the attiring of her to Fortune, who, in her blindness, has put a vassal's drapery upon her." The duke was a virtuoso in the arts. It was his

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only merit. He was esteemed the best judge of sculpture in Paris, and the works of the finest masters waited for his decision before the standard of their merit could be fixed. On this occasion, however, the count perceived, from the looks of the duke's auditors, that their acquiescence in the propriety of his remarks arose less from deference than from their own opinion; nor was he astonished at the independence of their judgment, when, following the direction of their eyes, he saw Therese in the act of listening to some instructions which her lady was giving her. She was attired for the occasion, and seemed another and a fairer Therese. He was struck by a sudden stillness in the room: he looked around him: the groups of walkers had stopped; such of the company as had been sitting had left their places and approached the middle of the room. Admiration and wonder were painted in every face; every eye was riveted upon Therese. He felt a movement of jealousy at the influence of her beauty. He instinctively turned towards the party which he had encountered upon entering: he saw the duke in the same attitude of rapt contemplation. A sickness came over the count's heart as he marked the earnest gaze of the libertine. He felt a want of freer air, and quitted the room.

The count descended into the garden, in which a temporary building had been erected, where the company were to sup. The garden was intersected with walks, down one of which, narrow and thickly shaded, the count accidentally turned. An arbour was at the end of it, upon the seat of which he threw himself. And now he revolved a question which had never occurred to him before—"Was Therese to be won? Was her heart free? and, if it was, could he excite an interest in it?"—for something assured him that without engaging her affections, 'twas idle to hope for the possession of such a woman as Therese. "She would spurn his title and possessions, as she had spurned their owner! That act of indiscretion too!—What would he not give that he had never committed it! It might have awakened in a mind, so

constituted as hers, a feeling of offended pride which would be proof against all offers of atonement!"

He had mused about a quarter of an hour, when his meditations were interrupted by a scuffling at the entrance of the walk. The sound approached: it was that of a person trying to drag another along, who was ineffectually resisting—the count started up at the voice of the duke!

"Resist not," said the latter in a suppressed key, "resist not, but accompany me, and I swear to release you in a moment: I merely want to speak to you, free from observation."

The count was astonished at the silence of the person whom the duke addressed, and who neither remonstrated nor called for assistance, though still continuing to struggle. The walk was what is called a dark one, but it derived from the more open part of the garden, which was partially illuminated, sufficient light to discern the figure of any one who might approach—after passing a certain angle. Beyond this point the duke and the person who unwillingly accompanied him had now arrived. The figure of the latter was that of Therese! and, from the attitude of the duke, it was evident that, while with one arm he was forcing her along, with the other he held something to her mouth to prevent her from speaking.

"Now you are free!" exclaimed the duke, releasing Therese, and at the same time placing himself between her and the entrance of the walk; "now you are free! but you depart not till you have heard me. Leave this house to-night: my palace receives you, and my fortune is at your disposal!"

The count listened for her reply—Therese returned none. He saw her figure wavering—he heard a convulsive sob—in a bound he reached her, and caught her as she was falling back in a swoon.

- " Villain, who are you?" vociferated the duke.
- "The foe of a villain!" was the count's retort. "Three miles from the barrier of St. Dennis, to-morrow, an hour after sunrise!"

"I understand you, count," replied the other; "both time and place will suit: I shall be punctual!" and the count was left alone, supporting Therese.

What was to be done? To carry Therese into the house was to discover the adventure—she had swooned, and there were no restoratives at hand. He heard the tinkling play of a fountain—he durst not carry her to it: it was situated in the open part of the garden, in the principal walk, where the domestics of the countess were passing to and fro. The idea of the arbour struck him: he carried her into it, and laid her upon the seat. A minute, and he was in the room where the refreshments were already spread; another, and he was at her side again, with a vessel which he had filled with water. He set it down, and gently raising the insensible girl, and supporting her head upon his breast, he sprinkled her face and chafed her temples, until a faint sigh or two gave signs of returning animation.

"Let me go!" feebly articulated Therese, when she had come sufficiently to herself to speak, at the same time making an effort to remove the encircling arm of the count. "Let me go, if you are a man!"

"Therese," said the count softly, "'tis I. The villain who just now treated you with violence is not here. I happened fortunately to be at hand to render you assistance, and caught you when you fainted. Be satisfied: I shall remove my arm as soon as you are able to dispense with its support."

"I am able now," articulated Therese with an effort—half raising her head, but immediately dropping it again on the count's shoulder.

"You are too weak yet," said the count. "Remain where you are, and rely upon my honour, Therese! I shall discontinue my assistance the moment it becomes unnecessary."

"Therese," resumed the count, "this morning I offended you; I shall never—never presume to do so again. For a quarter of an hour have you lain insensible on my breast:

your lips have been within an inch of mine; I could have pressed them without your resisting me; but I would not—I durst not—for I respect you, Therese. Do you forgive me for what passed in the morning?"

- "I do," replied Therese. The count gently pressed the form that was reclining upon him. "I am better, my lord," said the maid; "I think I can now sit up."
- "There," said the count, "you are free!" He half relaxed his clasp: she withdrew herself from it—sat up—rose from the seat—attempted to walk a few paces, and staggered. The count's arm encircled her waist again, and her hand, which she had extended for assistance, was firmly locked in his. "You are still too weak," said he. "Return and sit down for a few minutes longer, and you will be perfectly restored." He drew her back, unresisting, into the arbour.
- "I can support myself, my lord," said Therese, as they sat down. He released her hand and waist.
- "Would you rather that gentleman were here?" asked the count.
 - "I know not whom you mean, my lord," was her reply.
- "The gentleman who dragged you hither," rejoined the count. "He seems to have conceived a passion for you. He offered you his palace and the command of his fortune, which is ample—would you accept them?"
 - " No!" said Therese.
 - "Not if he offered you his hand?"
 - " No!" reiterated the maid.
 - "Not if he were a duke?"
- "Not if he were a king, my lord!" emphatically exclaimed Therese.
- "Surpassing girl!" cried the count, "would you take me if I offered you may fortune and my hand?" Therese made no reply. Both sat silent for a space. "Therese, did you ever love?" inquired the count. Not a word said the maid.
- "If your heart is free, if you have never bestowed it upon another, and I should ask you to make a gift of it to me as an

honourable lover—as a husband, Therese!—should I stand any chance of obtaining it?" Therese was silent still. "Therese!" breathed the count, passing his arm stealingly round her waist, and gently drawing her towards him, "I love you! Give me an answer to my question—Could you return my love? Look! I am at your feet! Will you be mine?"

"Therese! Therese!" cried half a dozen voices together in the garden. She started up and broke from the count—not, however, before he had imprinted a kiss upon her hand—and with a swift though unsteady step glided out of the walk.

The count and the duke met the next morning; when a flesh wound, which the latter received in the breast, put an end to the affair.

The news of the duel soon spread over Paris, and in a day or two the cause of it also transpired; not through the incaution of either of the principals—each of whom had cogent reasons for keeping the adventure which led to their rencontre a secret—but through the laudable curiosity of one of the countess's attendants.

The day succeeding the ball, the place of Therese—who, from the agitation of the preceding evening, was so much indisposed as to be unable to rise till the afternoon—was filled, though not supplied, by another.

"A duel between the count and the duke!" exclaimed the countess:

"Ay, madam," rejoined the attendant; "and that is only half the wonder, and not the least wonderful half."

The curiosity of the countess was excited: the communicativeness of her maid required little to stimulate it. She had caught a glimpse of the duke following Therese, as the latter quitted the saloon, charged with some instructions to the superintendents of the supper-room: she descended after them into the garden, saw the duke overtake her, accost her,

and endeavour to draw her into the walk; and, on her refusing to accompany him, forcibly seize her and half carry her into it, applying his handkerchief to her mouth to prevent her from speaking: she had followed them into the walk, screening herself behind the trees, and had been an eye and ear witness of all that had taken place, from Therese's fainting in the arms of the count till her precipitate retreat from the arbour. Not a circumstance was omitted. If the adventure gained nothing in the relation, at least it was not a loser by it.

The countess spoke not a word till her attendant had concluded, nor for some time after; then throwing back her ringlets, and looking the latter full in the face—" The count offer marriage to Therese!" she exclaimed: "I must be satisfied of the truth of it from her own lips!"

Therese started up in the bed, when she saw the countess enter her chamber. "Lie down, Therese," said the latter, casting a discontented glance at the half-exposed neck of the disconcerted maid, "lie down, and tell me truly what passed between you and the count last evening in the garden." For Therese to tell anything was to tell the truth: she corroborated the communication of her substitute in every particular. "Do you believe the count?-Do you love the count? -Would you marry the count?" successively but fruitlessly interrogated the lady. Therese made no reply. aspiring girl!" continued the countess, "your silence proves your folly and credulity. But beware that your pride at the thought of enjoying the count's love does not make you the dupe of his artifice. He is a profligate! You should rather have listened to the honest Duke de B---. Understand from him the only terms upon which a domestic may hope for an alliance with a nobleman!" The countess was astonished at the imperturbable serenity with which Therese listened to her. "Confident girl!" she added, "you despise my warning, and may abide the consequences of your presumption! But you

are too high for your station! Your engagement with me expires in a fortnight. Apply to the count; perhaps he may help you to a better one. You are at liberty in a fortnight!"

"Would I had discharged her this very day!" cried the countess to her attendant, upon returning to her dressing-room; "and I should unquestionably have done so, had I but a fault to accuse her of." The latter part of this exclamation was delivered so emphatically that the attendant looked inquisitively in the speaker's face. The countess looked inquisitively at her attendant. "Well?" said the lady.

"Would you like to be furnished with one?" inquired the maid.

"Yes," after a look of conjecture, and a pause, rejoined the countess, and abruptly left the room. She rode about Paris till dinner-time. A hundred stops did her chariot make to receive the compliments of beaux, and interchange civilities with belles—her guests of the preceding evening. was all animation and volubility; she talked about a thousand things, but thought all the while of nothing but Therese and the count. She was engaged to a party in the evening. Upon going up to make her toilet, she saw the attendant who had officiated for Therese in the morning standing outside her dressing-room door. A look, admonitory of caution, caused her to check her pace and tread more softly. There was a pause at the door—a whisper—a gaze of satisfaction and inquiry a whisper again, which was answered by a smile—though the brow of the person who gave that smile was anything but an open one-and the countess, entering her apartment alone, found Therese up, and in readiness to wait upon her.

The countess's toilet was soon made. Little pains did it cost at any time, under the active and tasteful hands of Therese, and now less than ever, for the lady sat passive and abstracted, as though she took not the smallest interest in the operation; but her face was flushed, and languor hung upon

her features. She desired the bell to be rung; a page entered, and she asked for a glass of water. There were only her snow-shoes to tie on; the attendant entered with them, and proceeded to officiate for Therese, who was instantly dismissed. The countess cast a glance at her jewel-case which lay open upon the toilet, and then at the kneeling attendant. Her respiration became uneasy: the page re-entered with the glass of water; she drank it off eagerly, and exclaiming "be quick!" precipitately left the room.

Meanwhile the count was all conjecture. The silence of Therese, when he declared an honourable passion for her, was a mystery which he could not unravel. Did she doubt his sincerity? Did she feel that she could not love him? Were her affections engaged to another? A thousand times that day did he ask himself these questions, nor could he sleep at night with meditating upon them. Never was the sun so slow in rising as he appeared to the count on the morning that followed that night. The fever of incertitude was almost insupportable, and, when at length it was day, scarcely could he transact the customary and not ungrateful occupations of the dressing-room and parlour, or wait for the appropriate hour of repairing to the countess's toilet-which he intended to visit that morning for the last time, and merely to gain an interview with Therese. Scarcely had the clock struck when the count's foot was on the first step of her ladyship's staircase. With a throbbing heart he knocked at the dressing-room door; -it opened; -the countess was seated near her toilet:-behind her stood the attendantbefore her was an open trunk, and near it stood Therese; while an officer of justice, who was kneeling by the trunk, as though be had been in the act of examining it, held up, to Therese, a diamond brooch, which he exhibited with an air of low triumph and superciliousness.

"What is the matter?" involuntarily demanded the count, after he had surveyed the group for a moment or two.

"Oh, nothing," replied the countess; "only I have missed a diamond brooch, and the officer has found it in that trunk."

" And to whom does that trunk belong?" inquired the count.

"To me!" said Therese; while a smile—such as lofty scorn would give, provoked by a cause most foul and mean—played faintly on her lip. "That is my trunk," she repeated, "and the brooch was found in it; but the hand that put it there was not mine."

"Insolent!" exclaimed the countess, "your composure is the assurance of guilt, prepared to meet detection, and to outface it! but you escape, for this time;—you are free to leave my service—I shall not prosecute you. Here are your wages, and begone!"

"No," said Therese, "I shall neither take your money nor profit by your clemency! I shall go to the place where sooner or later guilt must take up its abode—though it is not always the offender who enters that place! I shall take my trial!—the wise and good judge may find out some means to unravel what, I own, is inexplicable to me!—If not, I must bear the stain of the sin which I never committed;—the punishment, whatever it may be, will be little compared to that!"

The count glanced at the lady Julie—her eye encountered his, and was instantly turned another way. He looked at her attendant—she was alternately folding and unfolding a ribbon, pursuing her occupation with an earnestness to which its importance was wholly disproportionate. He looked at Therese—she appeared more like the accuser than the accused—the judge than the criminal. Calmly, yet sternly, she surveyed the one and the other; and now and then raised her clear eyes to heaven, with an expression of mingled resignation and confidence.

"She is innocent!" exclaimed the count to himself, and with that kind of deep-drawn sigh, which, one might imagine, announces the transition from suspended vitality to resuscitation.

Therese heard it; involuntarily she looked at the count; she read in his countenance, which beamed meltingly upon her, the thoughts that were passing in his soul—he believed that she was innocent! Her cheek coloured till the richest vermilion would not have been deep enough to paint its die; —there were two or three slight convulsive movements of her fair throat—and the maid burst into a shower of tears!

"You may go, sir!" said the countess, addressing the officer: "I am sorry for the unhappy girl, and do not wish the law to take its course."

"Stop!" exclaimed Therese; "I go along with you!—I am your prisoner!"

"I am forbidden to take you into custody," said the officer, turning, as he was in the act of going out of the door, "and cannot."

"What shall I do?" ejaculated Therese.

"Surrender yourself to the mayor," remarked the count.

"It shall be done," said Therese, relocking the trunk; and hastily left the room.

Therese surrendered herself to the mayor; the countess and the attendant were summoned and examined; the officer proved the finding of the jewel in Therese's trunk, and she was committed for trial. And now nothing occupied all Paris but the count's passion for Therese, and the crime with which she had been charged. Her rejection of pardon, her voluntary surrender, her extraordinary beauty, and the fortitude with which she bore her imprisonment, were the theme of every tongue. The dignity, too, with which she conducted herself towards the Duke de B-was the subject of encomium and astonishment: he had called to wait upon her, but she peremptorily refused to see him. He had sent the first legal opinion in Paris to her, to undertake her cause; but, the moment she learned by whom the advocate had been employed, she firmly declined his services. The count, too, applied in vain to see her, until he prevailed on his sister, the Baroness C-, to accompany him; when he was admitted —and by that lady, now, were the legal advisers employed who were to conduct the defence of Therese.

The day of trial approached. Upon the eve of that day, the baroness and the count paid their customary visit to the prison: as they were going in, they were informed that Therese had been engaged all that morning with a stranger, who had the appearance of having recently arrived in Paris, and was still with her; and they were debating whether they should wait or call again—when a remarkably handsome young man, in military undress, issued from the passage leading to the room in which Therese was confined, and hastily passed them, and went out. The count's heart throbbed.

- "Who is that?" hastily interrogated he.
- "The stranger," replied the person whom he addressed: "She is now alone."

The count mechanically followed the baroness into Therese's apartment. His passion had assumed a deep and settled character. His lawyers had assured him that she was certain of being acquitted; and he had resolved that the moment she regained her freedom, he would implore her to intrust it to his keeping. He had fully apprised his sister of his intention, who, being a sensible, though a proud woman, implicitly and at once gave in to his views the moment she satisfied herself that it was impossible to divert him from his object—a step of the propriety of which every succeeding interview with Therese still more and more convinced her. Yet was the count uncertain as to the state of Therese's heart, which, as he never saw her alone, he had little opportunity of ascertaining. Seldom she looked at him, or he might perhaps have read it in her eye; seldom she spoke to him, or the tone of her voice might have given him some insight into it. In short, she maintained a marked and strict reserve towards the count, which was the more irksome to him from the frankness with which she communicated with his sister. The fear of some previous attachment continually haunted him, and frequent were his misgivings, although they were still outnumbered by his hopes. The latter, however, almost vanished when he saw the handsome stranger, who had been all that morning alone with Therese; and he stood before the fair captive speechless and cast down, as one who had been visited by some unexpected and astounding calamity.

"Is anything the matter!" asked Therese, alarmed at the count's appearance: "Is anything the matter?" repeated she, approaching him and taking his hand, then instantly dropping it again.

"Nothing," answered the count, with a smile, relieved by the earnestness of Therese's manner: "nothing is the matter: would Therese be unhappy were it otherwise?"

"Certainly," said Therese, relapsing into her usual distance.

The count thought of the stranger again. "You have had a visitor this morning," said the count.

"A friend," said she, with a sigh.

"And nothing more?" inquired the count. Therese was silent. "Come," said the count to the baroness, "I fear we intrude upon Therese—at least my company can be dispensed with. You, if you like, can stay, and I shall call for you in an hour."

"My lord! my lord!" cried Therese, as the count was departing, "you go in displeasure! Something has offended you! What is it, my lord? If the fault lies with me, let me know it, that I may repair it or atone for it."

"You mistake, Therese," replied the count, unwilling to come to an explanation with her in her present circumstances, especially as his sister was present; and somewhat soothed again by the energetic warmth of her appeal. "You mistake. All's well; only summon all your composure for to-morrow: till then, adieu, Therese!"

But the slight relief which the count had received from Therese's manner of accosting him vanished as soon as he found himself alone. The handsome stranger engrossed his thoughts, and kept him on the rack with conjecture and ap-

prehension. "He was just the man to interest such a woman as Therese! one whom such a woman would be likely to love with all her heart and soul!—to love lastingly—exclusively!" Though it was little more than a glimpse which he had caught of him, yet that glimpse gave the count the impression of a man of lofty feeling and fine sensibility. " If the affections of Therese were engaged, it was he, and he only, who was the master of them; -he was the man!" With some persons surmise is speedily converted into certainty; scarcely does the shadow stand before them, when it fills, or seems to fill, into substance. Such was the case with the count. He wandered through the suburbs of Paris, musing upon the utter frustration of his fondly cherished hopes by the union of Therese with the stranger. "She was lost to him!"—and how every thing else vanished along with her !-title, fortune, relative, friend,-yea, the whole world! In the place of which nothing appeared but a void, without a single object of solitude to interest or even occupy him. So is it ever with love. Except the woman of our heart, there is not an object of human desire, the loss of which, when the mind is in its full vigour, is attended for the time with a feeling of utter desolation. death of one hope is the birth of another; from chagrin at the failure of the present speculation, we turn to anticipation of success in the prosecution of a future one, which is ever at hand to engross and solace us: but the miscarriage of the lover is the missing of a leap which is to carry us over into some rare delicious spot of fair earth, from which a profound ravine divides us, without anything to snatch at should we fail to clear it, and with nothing but the torrent or the rock to receive us.

So lost was the count in his meditations, it was not until full three hours past the appointed time that he remembered his promise to call upon the baroness. He hastened back to the prison: "Was the baroness still with Therese?"—"No." "Was Therese alone?"—"No." "Who was with her?"—"The stranger." The count felt chilled from head to foot; he

tottered down the steps of the prison, and reached home he knew not how. Dinner was waiting—he could not partake of it. Some friends were expecting him—he could not see them. The Marquis of R—— had been there, and said he would call again in the evening—he must be denied to him and to every body! The count rushed up stairs to his chamber, and locked himself in.

Early upon the morning of the trial was the baroness with Therese. She found her attired in black. "Why not dress in white?" inquired the baroness.

"I wear," replied Therese, "the dress that I shall wear for ever, unless Providence has ordained that I shall take it off to-day."

The baroness asked her how she felt.

"Prepared," was her answer. Ever since she had entered the prison, she had accustomed herself to regard her conviction as certain. "Because," added she, "the efforts that we make to meet calamity as we ought, although it should not arrive, are never thrown away; whereas, by indulging in anticipations of good fortune, we aggravate the pain of disappointment." The baroness gazed upon the beautiful moralist, and was silent. "I have bade good by in time," continued Therese, "to hopes, from which, had I permitted myself to cherish them, it might have cost me my life to part." Her eyes were cast down while she uttered this; she sighed deeply, and raising them, encountered the kind but penetrating looks of the baroness.

"You are a wonder!" exclaimed the latter, "and deserve to be the wife of a prince!" The maiden's eyes fell again, and a faint blush rose upon her cheek. "Therese," continued the baroness, "I am as confident of your innocence in this affair as I am of my own. I need not tell you what the count thinks of you. We are resolved that the whole world shall see how much we honour you, whatsoever may be the issue of this trial. This is the richest of our family jewels, and is known to all the nobility of Paris, hundreds of whom will be

in the court to-day; it is known to be mine; it has not its fellow in France for the weight and lustre of the diamonds. You shall wear it. It stamps you as the object of our love and respect; it proclaims our contempt for the aspersion which has been cast upon you. Take it," she repeated, throwing a necklace of brilliants over Therese's neck, and at the same moment catching the astonished maid, subdued and all dissolved in tears, to her bosom.

They were interrupted by the entrance of the gaoler, who informed Therese that the court was waiting for her.

The summons recalled her self-possession. "In a minute," she said; and in a minute her countenance was clear and smiling.

- "You are ready, I see," said the baroness.
- "I am," replied Therese.
- "Come, then," said the baroness, "I shall accompany you into court."

Never met the baroness such a look as that which was turned upon her by Therese. There was an effort to speak; a smile that acknowledged her inability to do so; a pressure of the fair maid's heart by her hand—a sigh—and nothing more.

The court was crowded. Half the nobility of France was there; many had been attracted from distant parts by the fame of the approaching trial; and thousands, who had been baffled in their attempts to gain admission, surrounded the building without. The noble friends of the countess were seated in the vicinity of the part allotted to witnesses; opposite to them were the counsel of Therese, with the count, whose looks, pale and languid, bore the traces of the last day's agitation, and of the night of restlessness and fever which had succeeded that day. By all who knew the count, or to whom he was pointed out, this was set down to the interest which he took in Therese, and construed into an unfavourable omen, as to the issue of the trial. At length, upon a movement in that part of the court where the prisoner was

expected to enter, the buzz that had been kept up by the interchange of a thousand mingled questions and replies, given in an under breath, subsided, and was succeeded by a dead silence, which became, if possible, more breathless, when the majestic form of the baroness appeared, supporting the fair Therese.

Upon her entrance, the baroness curtsied to the court, with an air which implied rather an assertion of her own diguity than an acknowledgment of deference; she then led Therese to the front, and contemplating her for a moment or two with an expression of satisfaction at the conscious innocence which was eloquently painted in her looks and demeanour, she imprinted a kiss upon each of her cheeks, and retired about half a pace behind her.

The indictment having been read, the counsel for the prosecution opened the pleadings. He was a middle-aged man, more indebted to family influence than to talent for the office which he held—that of advocate for the crown. the particulars of the case; the missing of the jewel by the countess; her suspicions of Therese; the searching of Therese's trunk, and the finding of the jewel secreted in it. He then descanted upon the lady's clemency; and, passing on to Therese's rejection of forgiveness, exerted all his sophistry to invalidate the merit of that act. "Remember," said the advocate, "remember who was present—a nobleman who had declared an honourable passion for the prisoner-had made her the proffer of his hand!-to ally herself to whose house might have been an object of ambition to the daughter of the most illustrious family in France. What bounds would you set to desperation in a predicament like that, where aggrandisement beyond the wildest dreams of aspiring fancy was to be exchanged for the contempt and desertion attendant upon a blasted character? What chance of retrievement, howsoever desperate, would not be caught at, where death itself was to be preferred to the frustration of hope? Look at the collected girl that stands before you, upon whose youthful

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nerves that solemn seat of justice-this array of learning and searching deliberation—this crowded concourse, produce not the slightest impression! What might you not expect from the intrepidity—I will not say effrontery—I will not say boldness--" At the commencement of this appeal to the deportment of Therese, the advocate looked full upon the fair prisoner, at whom he had only glanced before. As he perused the ingenuous face, where blandness and beauty sat equally enthroned—as he read in it, traced by the hand of Heaven itself, a refutation, in eloquence surpassing the advocacy of a thousand tongues; his confidence wavered; his collectedness began to forsake him, and he was obliged to turn another way: but a new source of discomfiture awaited him—he saw by the looks of the court that his embarrassment was perceived-scarce a countenance but betrayed the smile that triumphed at its detection. He felt confounded—he faltered—he stopped!—"I feel it unnecessary," said he at length, "to dilate upon this point; I shall trouble the court no further, but proceed to call my witnesses;" and he sat down.

The countess was summoned. Her examination was brief. That of the officer, who followed her, occupied about the same time. The attendant was the next witness, and underwent a strict cross-examination.

"Do you entertain any ill-will towards the prisoner?" asked the counsel of Therese.— "None." "Have you ever quarrelled with her?"—"No." "Do you truly believe that she deposited the jewel in her trunk?"—"She did not like to think ill of any one." "That is not an answer to my question:—Do you believe that she put it there?"—"How else could it have come there?" "Answer me, Yes or No," said the advocate. "Do you believe that Therese secreted the jewel in her trunk?—Yes or No?"—"Yes!" at last faltered out the attendant. "Now, my girl," continued the advocate, "pay heed to what you say—remember you are upon your outh!—Will you swear that you did not put it there yourself?" There was a pause and a profound silence. After about

a minute had elapsed—"Well!" said the advocate. Another pause; while in an assembly where hundreds of human hearts were throbbing, not an individual stirred or even appeared to breathe, such was the pitch of intensity to which the suspense of the court was wound up.

"Well," said the advocate a second time, "will you answer me? Will you swear that you yourself did not put the jewel into Therese's trunk?"—"I will," at last said the attendant boldly. "You swear it?"—"I do." "And why did you not answer me at once?"—"I do not like that such questions should be put to me," replied the attendant.

For a minute or two the advocate was silent. A feeling of disappointment seemed to pervade the whole court; now and then a half suppressed sigh was heard; and here and there a handkerchief was lifted to an eye, which was no sooner wiped than it was turned again upon Therese with an expression of the most lively commiseration. The maid herself was the only individual who appeared perfectly at her ease; even the baroness looked as if she was on the point of giving way, as she drew closer to Therese, round whose waist she now had passed her arm.

"You have done with the witness?" said the advocate for the prosecution.

"No," replied the other, and reflected for a moment or two longer. At length, "Have you any keys of your own?" said he.—"I have." "I know you have," said the advocate. "Are they about you?"—"Yes." "Is not one of them broken?"—"Yes." After a pause—"Show them me!" The witness, after searching some time in her pocket, took the keys out and presented them. "Let the trunk be brought into court," said the advocate.

"Now, my girl," resumed the advocate, "attend to the questions which I am going to put to you, and deliberate well before you reply, because I have those to produce who will answer them truly should you fail to do so. Were you ever in the service of a Monsieur St. Ange?"—"Yes," replied the

attendant, evidently disconcerted. "Did you not open in that gentleman's house a trunk that was not your own?"-"Yes," with increased confusion. "Did you not take from that trunk an article that was not your own?"-"Yes; but I put it back again." "I know you put it back again," said the advocate. "You see, my girl, I am acquainted with the whole affair: but before you put it back again, were you not aware that you were observed?" The witness was silent. "Who observed you?-Was it not your mistress?-Did she not accuse you of intended theft?---Were you not instantly discharged?" successively asked the advocate, without eliciting any reply. "Why do you not answer, girl?" peremptorily demanded he.- "If you are determined to destroy my character," said the witness, bursting into tears, "I cannot help 'it." "No," rejoined the advocate; "I do not intend to destroy a character; I mean to save one-one which, before you quit the court, I shall prove to be as free from soil as the snow of the arm which is leaning upon that bar!" continued the advocate, pointing towards Therese.

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The trunk was here brought in. "You know that trunk!"—
"Yes." "Whose is it?"—"It belongs to the prisoner." "And these are your keys?"—"Yes." "Were these keys out of your possession the day before that trunk was searched, and the jewel found in it?"—"No." "Nor the day before that again?"—"No." "Now mind what you are saying: you swear that for two days preceding the morning upon which that trunk was searched those keys were never once out of your own possession?"—"I do."—"Will not one of these keys open that trunk?"—The witness was silent.—"Never mind!—we shall try. As readily as if it had been made for it!" resumed the advocate, applying the key and lifting the lid.

"There may be fifty keys in the court that would do the same thing!" interposed the public prosecutor.

"True," rejoined his brother: "but this is not one of them," added he, holding up the other key, "for she tried

this key first, and broke, as you see, the ward in the attempt."

- "How will you prove that?" inquired the prosecutor.
- "By producing the separate part."
- "Where did you find it?"
- "In the lock!" emphatically exclaimed the advocate.

A groan was heard—the witness had fainted. She was instantly removed.

A smith was the next witness. He proved that he had been employed to take off the lock, in order to ascertain if any attempt had been made to force it, and that, upon removing it, he found a piece of a broken ward in it. The piece was produced, and found exactly to match the key.—The prosecutor gave up his cause; and the waving of handkerchiefs and the clapping of hands announced the complete vindication of the innocent Therese, who, half overcome, stood folded in the arms of the baroness.

Anxiously had Count Theodore watched the proceedings of the day, though other matters had also a share in his thoughts. Immediately upon entering the court he looked round for the stranger—he was not there; and the count breathed more freely. When Therese and his sister appeared, he was the first individual upon whom the eye of the former rested; she remarked his wan and haggard looks, and there was an anxiety and a tenderness in her gaze, which were balm to his wounded spirit; and he smiled his thanks to her. Nothing could exceed his agitation as the cross-examination of the attendant proceeded, except the tumult of his feelings at the complete exposure of her perjury, by the discovery of the infamous means which she had resorted to, to effect the destruction of Therese. Then it was that, as he thought, Therese cast a look upon him, such as he had never received from her before—a look in which gratitude and exultation shone, but threw forth a beam, too warm and too bright for their own light alone to have produced it. It played but a moment or two upon him, when it was withdrawn; but the glow which it spread through his heart departed not with it. The chalice of happiness, which he thought had been spilled, stood full again before him; and where, an hour ago, he pored upon the embers of extinguished hope, he now beheld nothing but rekindling. He made his way out of court, regardlessly putting aside every individual that impeded it;—he flew to the prison—a step or two brought him to the door of Therese's apartment; without knock, or warning of any kind, he entered—he started back!—she was locked in the arms of the stranger! The shock was too much—the room swam before him, and wanished.

He recovered with the sensations of one who awakes from some horrible dream: the first objects that he saw were the stranger and the baroness standing by him. He looked around for Therese—she was not there! At length he became conscious that he was leaning upon the breast of some person, whose arm encircled his neck; he suddenly turned and looked up; he met the eyes of Therese, fixed strainingly upon him, with an expression that shot life into his soul.

"Is it true?" he exclaimed, withdrawing himself from her, and at the same time extending his arms;—she threw herself into them, and thrillingly they closed around her!

The stranger was the brother of Therese. He was in the service, and his merit had raised him to the rank of captain. By some unaccountable means, for upwards of five years they had lost sight of one another. A relation, under whose protection he had left her, had recently died, and left her utterly unprovided for; when she sought and obtained a service with the countess. The report of the accusation which had been brought against her, and of the count's passion for her, having spread far and wide, at last reached the ears of her brother: he hastened up to Paris, and found everything confirmed; but at her earnest entreaty, kept their relationship concealed till the trial should be over.

- "Then she is mine!" in a transport of exultation exclaimed the count.
- "She is, my lord!" replied the brother: "nor is this the first honour of the kind that your family has conferred upon ours."
 - "How so?" inquired the count.
- "One of your ancestors espoused an ancestor of my sister's and mine."
 - "The name?" eagerly asked the count.
 - "The rese l'Estrange," was the reply.

The count's banqueting-room was one blaze of light, and around its sumptuous board were seated the count's illustrious relatives and the choicest of his intimates and friends. They were at supper—the viands were removed, and the nearest of his kinsmen rising, demanded a chalice of gold! 'Twas brought; he filled it to the brim, and bowing to the lady and the count, he drank "To the bridegroom and bride!" It was the day after the trial; and upon the morning of that day a second and a fairer Therese had been grafted on the family tree.

THE DISPENSATION.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

From their cradles up,
With but a step between their several homes,
Twins had they been in pleasure;

And strangers to content if long apart.

Wordsworth.

- "I see thim, not tin minutes ago, cross over to the corner of the round meadow, forenint the hill. I'm thinking they're gone down to the Bleach Ground."
- "Them!—who, Molly?"—continued a young man, whose inquiry had elicited the above information from the old village gossip, Matty Flinn.
- "Why, Miss Mary Sullivan, and her Dublin cousin, Jessie Armstrong, and somebody else, to be sure; there's no getting sight or light of Miss Mary, since that one came to the country; not but what she's a nice slip of a girl, too, only not to be compared to our own born child—as I may call her." The young man smiled, and without further observation passed on to the "round meadow."
- "There's one 'ill be there afore ye, my boy," said the weman, as she leaned her withered arms across the half-hatch door, and replaced her pipe in her mouth—" and one that 'ill make you look sharp if ye're after the same sport. Och hone!" she added, after a long pause, "it's sorrowful thinking what's afore the young."

I must now briefly explain who were the parties that excited even the sympathy of Matty Flinn.

Two brothers of the name of Sullivan, some years previous to the time at which my story commences, had quitted the North of Ireland to reside in the South. They were skilful, honest, and industrious; and the work of their hands naturally prospered. After the lapse of a few years they were universally looked upon as among the most substantial yeomen of the county, and were respected alike by rich and poor, Cornelius, the younger of the two, had established a bleach green, on the banks of the stream that turned the elder brother's mill. The bleacher's dwelling stood-always neatly white-washed, and surrounded by wild roses—at the bottom of a little dell, through which the clear water murmured and sparkled on its course; while the cottage of the miller was built by the mill-side. Corney had been blessed with only one child; and, without the aid of poetic imagination in any way, she might truly be pronounced a most interesting if not a beautiful girl; her childhood had been one of delicacy and suffering—and if the almost blighted bud did at last blossom, it still seemed unable to bear the cold breath of winter, or the scorching heat of summer; but Mary's kind parents shielded her alike from both, and she increased in loveliness and innocence beneath their roof, even as her own water lilies were shaded and nourished by the moist and fostering bank on which they grew.

Mary's delicate health usually prevented her from joining the village girls either at wake, fair, or pattern; but were it not for the interruptions of sickness her life might have been termed one long holiday; her only employments consisted in occasionally aiding in watering the bleaching linen, in discharging the duties incident on the care of a small dairy, and in looking to the family needle-work. She would move silently, both within and without the house, after the footsteps of her parents; ready to cheer them with her soft, sweet smile, or to assist, when permitted, in their toils; but she

always seemed serene and happy—whether occupied in these domestic matters, or seated on the green sward that sloped from their threshold to the stream, her thin, white hands clasped over her knees, her face upturned, and her eyes fixed on the clear blue sky, or the moving clouds as they passed along the heavens.

. Without being sensible of it, she must have imbibed much poetic feeling by such a life. Surrounded by beautiful scenery, apart from cities and their vices, the budding, flourishing, fading, and decayed leaves alone told her of the changing seasons; and, as they came and departed, reminded her that another year had been added to her existence. The prayers, even though she might not fully understand them, which she repeated at her mother's knee, were hallowed by a holy mystery to her unformed mind; and the rude chapel, where in an unknown tongue what she believed God's veritable language rang upon her ear, appeared a sacred temple she wouldhave died rather than profane. The deep but delicate tracery of such a mind might have afforded intense interest to some of our morbid mental anatomists, who too often destroy the rose in search of an imagined canker, and would fain extract poison from the lily's bosom. Her opportunities for acquiring knowledge were indeed limited; the school was too distant for her to attend-if truth must be told, her mother could neither read nor write, and her father was too busy to think of her education. The good man had, it is but honest to confess, ia common with many other worthy men, an antipathy to learned ladies, and could not imagine any reason why Mary should be more accomplished than her mother, who was, to use his own phrase, "as clean-skinned-as righthanded—as honest, and as pretty a woman, as you'd see in the country side." Had it not been for the miller's son, her cousin Alick, I really think she never would have learned even to read; but Alick proved himself the very model of a tutor. The boy would sit, hour after hour, pointing with a crow-quill to the balf-legible words and letters of "the read-a-madeasy,"—coaxing, explaining, entreating—but never even reproving his gentle little pupil. It was, however, astonishing how rapidly Mary improved when she could once fairly get through a book; she soon became teacher in her turn—would read aloud the Seven Champions, and the adventures of the robber Freney, with so much effect, when only thirteen, that Alick, who was three years older, absolutely began to deliberate whether he, in his own proper person, would become eighth champion or Freney the second.

Alick had only one brother-an elder but not a wiser youth; for poor Walter-or, as he was usually called, Watty -was considered so devoid of intellect as to be unable to render assistance to his father in any way; he was impatient of control, idle, and restless; but shrewd withal, and often keen of speech-sometimes as just as severe in his remarks; scrupulously honest, and full of truth; he loved wandering, and submitted to the restraint of a moderate quantity of clothes with evident reluctance; had a deep, melodious voice, and, in early boyhood, a deadly hatred to his brotherchanged, however, by a simple circumstance into as strong an affection. The two youths were passing through a distant village where Alick had been sent to transact some business. for his father; strange boys; gathered raised and monked at Walter, who, with a wreath of scarlet poppies, inchis black and flowing curls, presented to their unholy: feelings a fit subject for mirthful scars; the colour deepened on the cheek of the insulted lad, but, before he could retaliate, Alick turned on the tormentors, and wielded a shilled with so much spirit that they fled in all directions; one, however-a cowardly, ill-conditioned fellow-suddenly turned, and directing a stone at the hero, felled him to the earth; in another moment Walter was bending over his brother, uttering the most piercing shricks, and wringing his hands in bitter agony; the effects of the blow were merely stunning, but the afflicted youth never forgot Alick's interference on his behalf; he became troublesomely officious and affectionate, and would weep like an infant if reproved by him, or prevented from following wherever he went

Such are a few early passages in the history of these nearlyrelated families; they seemed more closely knit into one by time and circumstance. A few years passed-Mary was about eighteen-when another consin, an aunt's daughter, came from Dublin to visit her-no trifling event when we consider that Miss Jessie had gone day pupil to a boardingschool in Stephen's Green-and informed her cousin, in a letter which though "iligantly written" was very difficult to read, that she would bring her all the bran new fashions, and a sky-blue mustin dress! She arrived at the appointed time, and certainly dazzled the whole village by her finery; a Leghern bonnet, spick and span new, with green bunches of ribbon under the brim, while from out of the middle of each peeped forth a red, red flower, like a rose blossoming in a full-grown cabbage; then her hair!—such carls!— French curls, in full friz, bound up behind in the cockatoofashion, and oiled to the destruction of cleanliness and white caps; sandalied shoes-tortoise-shell combs-figured bands; and a black silk cloak. Jessie was a pretty, good-tempered girl, but partook of the Dublin mania for finery; and Mrst Sullivan declared, that for the first week the lassie was in her house she could settle to nothing, from the sheets of people that came from far and near to get one look at the fashions, as exhibited on the person of Jessie Arm-

Matty Flinn, whither these two damsels had wandered for their evening recreation, it may be necessary to state, was neither "cousin Alick," nor "poor cousin Walter;"—but the nephew and heir apparent of little Father Neddy Cormack, parish priest of Killane, and licentiate of the college of Salar manca. Stephen Cormack proceeded at a good pace, in starch lof the young girls, or, sooth to say, in search of one, whom for many measons he beped some day or other to sa-

lute as Mrs. Stephen; he was a tall, slight youth, whose features had more the dark and downcast character of the Milesian Irish, than the round and joyous expression of the more recent settlers; upon this occasion he did not seem in a particularly happy mood, for he swung his stick from side to side, and most industriously decapitated every plant and little shrub within his reach. As he passed under the branches of a lofty oak, and raised his arm for the purpose of destroying some scores of juvenile acorns that clustered above his head, his weapon of destruction was wrested from his hands, and, at the same moment, a wild and singular figure dropt from the branches. The man of the oak might have served as the model of a Hercules; he had on neither shoes nor stockings, and his pantaloons hardly descended below his knees; a short, tight jacket was girded round his waist by a broad belt of untanned leather; his shirt collar was thrown open, displaying a brown but superbly-moulded throat, on which a fine head was well and firmly set; he wore no hat, but his hair was bound with a scarlet kerchief, that, tied at the side in a large knot, added to his picturesque appearance. Though there was much of wildness, there was no indication of poverty about this wayward being; and as he laughed and bowed in mimic humility to the priest's nephew, a good deal of keen satiric humour played around his wellformed mouth, and danced in his large brown eyes, which in general were painfully lustreless to look upon. "And had ye no better amusement this fine summer evening, Saint Stephen,"-he said at last, after many extraordinary contortions, and having deliberately broken the thick stick with his fingers, as if it were a hazel twig-"Had ye no better amusement than mooking about like an ill-contrived spirit, smashing and killing the sweet flowers, that the moonbeams kiss and the merry bees breakfast on? And then ye must attack the holy tree that the birds—the blue wood-queest, and my spotted lady-thrush-nestle in, and" (he added in a lower tone) "the good people thimselves dance under,

all the long summer nights! Go home, young man; keep the holy father's books, and attind to your duties; an Irishman should scorn to strike anything that couldn't strike agin. Come, turn back, my tight chap, for I was just going to visit madam wood-queest's young family, when ye stopt me."

"Is there a nest in the tree, in earnest, Watty?" inquired Stephen, looking up amid the branches; "I can't see it!" .

"Ye gawking gomersal!" said Watty, "d'ye think the ould parents, that to my knowledge have brought up honestly nine nest-fulls of as pretty birds as ever stretched wing, would make a show of their childre' to plase you? The longer the wild animals live in the world the wiser they get:
—and that's more nor can be said of you or I, Saint Stephen."

Stephen did not much relish the compliment; but he put his hand into his pocket, and extracting sixpence, held it up before Watty, who he supposed had all the love of money that frequently characterises those who, although endowed with quickness and susceptibility, are devoid of the stronger powers of reason. "I'll give ye the sixpence, if you'll bring me the young birds," said the tempter; "and it 'ill be doing good, too, for the queests are the ruin of the corn-fields. I won't hurt them," he continued, seeing Walter's look of distaste; "I'll give them to your cousin, Miss Mary, as a present."

"I'm jist thinking," replied Walter, after a brief pause, as he folded his arms, and gazed, not angrily, but scornfully, upon the countenance of Stephen—"that ye're the very moral of Onld Nick, except that ye haven't his courage—he's a powerful deal of courage, that same cratur, as all must who go aginst God—ye're afeard of hurting y'er purty limbs and fine duds to go after the innocent birdeens thimselves, so ye keep one of the devil's pocket-tokens, to tempt others to the mischief! Is it the corn they ate? His reverence 'ill expect his sacks as full if the crows and queests ate up all

the grain from this to Derry. And ye think a nest o' feather-less birds, followed by the wails and the cries of their broken-hearted mother, a fit present to make a tender woman; and ye think, may-be, she'd love ye the better for having the heart to tear the childre' from the parents? Ba! ba! Saint Stephen!—the devil's saint ye are, sure enough!" Without further query, or waiting an answer, he sprang into the tree; and as he mounted amid its highest branches, his full, round voice trolled out the old song:—

"Lady, I will give you the bells of Londonderry, When you are sad, to ring, to make you merry, If you'll be my true lover."

"Sir, I'll not accept of the bells of Londonderry, When I'm sad, to ring, to make me merry, Nor will I be your true lover."

"The wild-nettle chap!" muttered Stephen, as he proceeded along the tangled path-way; "the fellow's always stinging—he's more knave than fool; fine times he has of it, sprying about the trees like a squirrel; the hares and birds know him so well, they'll hardly take the trouble to get out of his way!"

It was some time before Stephen perceived in the distance the object of his search; and when he did, he saw that she was accompanied, not only by Jessie, but by her cousin Alick; the two girls were seated on the shafts of a car, that had been placed across a gap in lieu of a gate; and Alick was stretched on the grass, of which he occasionally pulled handfuls, and flung at the young maidens in rustic sport—a compliment they were not slow to return, though Jessie, it must be confessed, did it tenfold. Mary threw the wild buttercupe at her former tutor, with what might almost be termed graceful awkwardness; and when Alick's sparkling glance met hers, the deep, quick blush told unconsciously of more than cousin's love.

"Mary! Alick!" exclaimed Jessie, "As I live, you comes

Mister Stephen—Smint Stephen, as poor Watty calls him—don't blush, now, Mary! Come, Alick, you and I will run away, and leave the lovers to themselves, which is only manners, you know—as we say in Dublin."

"Whatever you may say or do in Dublin, I don't know," replied Mary, rising; "but I take it very unkind in ye to trate me after that fashion; the young man is nothing to me beyant a neighbour's son—so behave, Jessie, if you please."

"Behave, Jessie, if you please!"—persisted the lively girl, mimicking Mary's serious manner—"a'n't I going to behave like an angel? Come, cousin Alick!" and she seized the hand of Alick, who certainly did not seem disposed to move. "Jessie! Alick!"—exclaimed Mary, evidently much moved, "Do not make me appear foolish!—you know, Jessie, right well, that I have neither love nor liking for him."

"A likely story!" cried the provoking girl, "a very likely story!—you can't blind a *Dubliner* after that fashion—how holy we are indeed!—as if I didn't know what hung on that ribbon round your neck, besides the scapular and silver crucifix."

"Tell me!" said Alick eagerly, for the first time in his life sacrificing Mary's feelings to his own curiosity; "Tell me, Jessie."

Mary, unable to articulate, covered her face with her hands—while the giddy girl replied, "A gold smelling bottle, with a shamrogue-shaped stopper, and some letters—three, I think—carved on it, one of which, I'd give my oath, is an S." Before the sentence was finished, poor Mary had fainted; and Alick, with flushed cheek and burning brow, was supporting her, while Jessie, frightened out of her little wits, ran to get some water from the stream.

During her momentary absence, Alick (men are sometimes, the very best of them, most impertinently and abominably curious) had drawn the ribbon, by the little bow, from beneath the modest kerchief which was carefully folded over her bosom, and kissed the three relics with pilgrim-like de-

votion, as they hung outside her dress; when the mischief-making Jessie returned. Alick, placing Mary's head on her shoulder, observed, in an under tone of deep agitation, "You'd better hide that blessed—I mean that unfortunate ribbon—before Stephen comes up." Mary did so, and then, looking at Alick, exclaimed, "Lord save us!—ye're as red in the face as a Dublin lobster!"

Previous to Mary's perfect recovery, even while Jessie was overwhelming her with apologies, assurances, and sorrows, Stephen joined the group, and seemed much astonished at the restraint visible on the countenance of each. undertook the task of explaining the events of the evening. which, like most chattering persons, she did, much to her own satisfaction, and the dissatisfaction of the rest of the party. Stephen thought she threw no light on the subject, and Mary and Alick fancied she threw too much; the fact was, Jessie herself was bewildered; and surmises, as opposite as the antipodes, crowded her pate in such quick succession as positively to fetter her tongue. On their walk homeward, when they came within sight of the Bleach House, Jessie, at a turn of the lane, relinquished Mary's arm; Stephen, lover-like, availed himself of the opportunity, and placed it within his.

- "The path's too narrow for three, Stenie," observed Alick, somewhat sharply.
- "Walk behind or before, thin, if you like," retorted the other quietly.
- "I'll do neither one nor the other," replied Alick; "but keep y'er own place, and make way for y'er betters."
 - " I will when I see them," was the cutting reply.

Mary pressed her cousin's arm to enjoin silence, but in vain.

- "If the girls weren't here, I'd soon show ye the differ, for all ye carry y'er head so high—offering freedoms where they're not acceptable, Mister Stephen Cormack!"
 - "Stephen! Alick! for the sake of the holy saints!" ex-

claimed both girls at once—as the young men regarded each other with menacing looks.

- "Whir—a-boo—boo!"—shouted Walter, separating the thick and thorny furze hedge that bounded the path-way, and springing between the contending parties—"What's the breeze now?—and what are ye frightening my white lily for?" And circling his cousin's waist with his arm, he waved a huge branch of oak over his head.
- "Saint Stephen, if you offer to lay hands on Prince Alick, I'll make as nate a little cock-throw of ye, as iver Saint Patrick pitched at."
- "For mercy's sake!" said Mary—rousing all her strength for the effort, and disengaging herself from her wild cousin's support—"do not quarrel for nothing. I have known you both all my life, and I never asked favour from either; but promise me, Alick—Stephen—promise to forget this foolish—"

"To be sure they'll promise!" exclaimed Walter. "Prince Alick will do it for—I know what—and Saint Stephen will do it for—" He seized Stephen by the back of the neck, and again waved his bough, laughing and singing:—

Oh, brave King Brian! he knew the way
To keep the peace, and to make the hay;
For those who were bad, he knocked off their head,
And those who were worse, he killed them dead.

"Oh, I'll promise," said Stephen, doggedly, "anything to oblige Miss Mary Sullivan; not that I fear or care about a bit of a spree, more than any other boy living; it's fine exercise, and keeps a body in practice; only to oblige her—" He held out his hand, which Alick frankly took; and peace restored, they proceeded to the Bleach Green—Walter jumping and singing with evident glee, but continuing, at the same time, a cat-like inspection of the party.

"Come in, and take supper, Stephen; I see the potatoes are up, and my aunt promised us some beans and bacon, as

a treat, to-night," said the kind-hearted miller's son; but Stephen declined, while Walter went to him, and with a solemn look pretended to brush something off his shoulder. "The black boy sticks like a buz on ye, astore—wash him off with holy water when ye goes home," observed the half-witted creature, and then sprang over the rude palings that separated the green from the neat court-yard.

Stephen Cormack went on his way, but not rejoicing; and when he entered his uncle's dwelling he sat down on the three-legged stool, opposite the priest, in evident ill humour.

Father Neddy Cormack fitted as neatly into his arm-chair as a nut does in its shell; he was a little tun of a man, upon which the head stood without any visible connection with the body; his face was seamed and browned in open defiance of beauty and art; his nose was puggish and purple; his brows heavy and moveable, and it was only when they were wrinkled up in two or three folds that the peering, and really bright twinkling, of two little grey eyes, informed you that if the creature possessed power in proportion to its cunning it would indeed be fierce and dangerous. The thing would have made an admirable attorney, but a bad counsellor, and certainly was a very unfit director of the spiritual or temporal affairs of the parish, which he endeavoured to rule—not guide.

It has been my lot to know, esteem, and love, true and loyal members of the Catholic Church. I have looked upon many priests and friars with veneration and respect—I have delighted in observing their kindness, their gentleness, and their honest discharge of what they considered duty—I have known them to make great sacrifices, and endure much patiently; and I say it to their credit, that I never met but one among them in any way resembling the person whom I have endeavoured to describe. Without being gifted with the gentlemanly bearing of a Jesuit, he had a good deal of the tact and artifice belonging to that subtle sect—which he used to blind his humble associates—with a hot and fiery tempe-

rament that subdued when the other failed. He had not interfered much with the Sullivans; they were liberal, and performed "their duties" regularly; had stations twice in the year at their respective houses, and paid to priest, as well as minister, "tythes of all they possessed;" but they were more enlightened than their neighbours, and so Father Neddy wisely thought that "it was better to let well-enough, alone." He had anxiously urged the wooing of his nephew with Mary. She was considered "the best fortune" for many miles round, and the match was decidedly desirable—for Stephen was one of those contented Irish spirits, who, disdaining either mental or bodily exertion, as incompatible with "genteel birth or breeding," trust first to their relations, and afterwards to chance, for bed, board, and all other necessaries.

The priest's best parlour was furnished precisely as occasion required: when there was "grand company," the long settle was brought from the kitchen, and its dirt and deficiencies concealed by a flowered bed-quilt, thrown over and pinned round it by the old housekeeper, who had the Irish talent of making one thing, like Shakspeare's player, "play many parts"—then Father Ned's dressing-table (as it was called) stood in lame helplessness between the dimly-showing windows-and placed on it (the cracked portions turned to the wall) were two or three old-fashioned china jars, filled with a few flowers, that, conscious of being out of character, or affected by the smoky atmosphere, drooped and died " within an hour." On the evening to which I particularly allude. 'no such luxuries were present; a green bottle, a large, thick glass tumbler with a tin foot, and an empty jug, were on the solitary round oak table that graced the centre; to the right of this was the priest's high-cushioned easy chair, and the little footstool upon which his feet rested; he reclined perfectly at his ease-his hands just meeting over his rotund person, his mouth open, his eyes shut-a very Cruikshank of devotion. As his nephew entered, a grunting sound intimated that he was aware of the circumstance; but he neither altered his position nor elevated his brows, so that whether he unclosed his eyes or not was doubtful. Stephen first pulled forth some of the dead leaves that garnished the rusty grate; then contemplated the extraordinary vessel, that, hanging over the chimney-piece, displayed a crucifix at the top, and a well, or cup, at the bottom, calculated to hold about a pint of holy water; and finally pushed the dog over the cat, which the lady resented in a very cat-like fashion, and the rencontre between the animals perfectly aroused the sleepy priest.

"By the foot of Pharaoh!" he exclaimed, " (and that's the first oath I've swore to day) I'll make an example of ye if ye don't let the bastes alone; there's no pace in the house whin ye're in it, the poor ould cat—the creatur!—can't escape ye (pusheen! pusheen! agra!—never heed him). that the work ye've been after all day? Holy Mother! I'll engage it's far from ye to go down to that beggarly blaguard, Lunty Murphy-and put him in mind o' the barley male he never saint; and it's long till ye'd gather a few goose or turkey eggs in your dandy pockets, though ye're ready enough to ate 'em, when they come into the house; and more than tin times, and tin to the back o' that, I've tould ye to spake to Jeremiah Callagan, about the bill he sint in for my new jock, after his 'greeing to set the last two christ'nings forenint it; and though I dare say ye've been philandrin' at the Bleach Green, it's long till ye'd put in a word about the tow-linen, that's waiting to be whitened these three weeksand—"

"It's little I expect from the Bleach Green," interrupted the hopeful Stephen; "and if ye knew all, uncle, instead of blowing me up, ye'd be advising me how to act with that boy, Alick Sullivan, who I see plainly—fool as I was not to see it afore—has undermined me with Mary."

"Bathershin!" replied the priest, "that's one of your notions, because ye haven't courage to ask the girl to marry ye; sure, I know how they love each other—jist like brother and

sister. I'd like to see first cousins marry in my parish— the hereticks!—barring I got'em a Dispensation—a likely matter, I'm thinking!"

"For all that, it's as true as light's in heaven; he threatened to knock me down for walkin' with her this evening; and that mad brother of his made open game of your reverence."

I wish you, my gentle reader, had seen the Reverend Neddy Cormack at that moment; he rose from his seat, swelled and strutted about the room in proportionate rage; and at length broke forth into the following miscellaneous ejaculations:

"I'll excommunicate 'em all! To dare to spake of measter that sort! I suppose the next thing 'ill be that they'll think for themselves, as if their conscience was their own! Am I not parish priest of this entire parish of Killane?—answer me that—and see if I don't have my own way! Saint Peter—and Saint Ambrose—and Saint Obadiah—and all the Saints!—make game of me! Oh, the heathen assembly of Bebylonians! Let them do it without a Dispensation! I'll sind every mother's son o' them to the Holy Island barefooted—I'll make 'em say three avy's for every bit they put in their mouths! And as for that dancing, mopping knave, I'll lay the length and breadth of my Dublin riding-whip over his anchristian shoulders! I'll go down to the Bleach Green this minute, and make them pay well for absolution!"

"It was only the one that had no sense that did so, uncle dear," interrupted Stephen, fearing that he had gone too far, and that the priest would really go out; for he had taken his great coat off the peg, and fastened it under his throat by the solitary button which generally secured it. "As to the rest, they always trate ye as becomes God-fearing people; and, any way, it might be better to work with them on the sly, may-be."

"Demean myself to work on the sty, with my own people! I scorn y'er advice, Stephen Cormack! I'll show 'em what's

what—trate the nephew of their parish priest that way!—refuse him, indeed!"

"I wasn't to say refused, Sir," stammered out Stephen, "because I hadn't asked—that's not asked entirely."

"And how dare you be after putting me into a passion for nothin', you poor, pitiful sleeveen! if you don't know how to make love to a young woman, couldn't ye jist ask me to show ye, and not wait till the wind changes? D'ye think I've been hearing confessions from all manner of faymales for the last forty years, without knowing how to manage 'em —and to presume to come to me with your misrepresentations! Stephen! Stephen! —ye're a grate sinner! —how often have I tould you that telling a lie to me was quite a different thing from telling it to any one else; will ye never learn discrimination? Oh, Stephen!—you must say double prayers this might, for desaving the church!"

The nephew explained—the coat was replaced—whisky punch resorted to as peace-maker between the hopeful pair—and measures, which will be explained hereafter, were planned and resolved upon.

It is refreshing, after such a scene, to revert to that which on the same evening took place at the Bleach Green. When the frugal supper, seasoned with a due portion of good humour, though of a less boisterous nature than usual, had been discussed, Mary silently and quietly arose to withdraw; but as she passed her father, he looked upon her with even more than ordinary tenderness, and said, "Mary, darling, what ails ye? Y'er cheek is pale as y'er own white roses! What ails my lily-bud?"

"Nothing!" she would have replied, and a feeble smile struggled on her lips; but her eyes, "more bright than clear," and the increasing paleness of her cheek, stayed the assertion.

"There's something the matter with her, sure enough," observed the mother, anxiously rising from her seat.

Alick rose also; and, in a trembling voice, said, "Aunt—uncle—I'll tell ye all about it. Mary, love, sit down till I—Jessie, don't stir—we're all one family."

Mary moved her hand to implore silence; and, after the pause of a few moments, gathered strength to articulate, "Spare me, cousin!—I cannot, cannot bear this, though I deserve it all, and may-be more." She disengaged her hand from her father, and left the room.

"Don't follow her yet, Jessie," said Alick; "leave her to herself, aunt, honey, for a few minutes—her heart is full, and so is mine. And then he pressed his hands to his forehead, and leaned his elbows on the table.

How beautiful, how sacred, are the feelings of affection in pure and guileless bosoms! The proud may sneer at it—the fashionable may call it fable—the selfish and dissipated may affect to despise it! But the holy passion is surely of heaven, and is only made evil by the corruption of those whom it was sent to bless and to preserve.

Mary latched the door of her little chamber, and hardly conscious of what she ought to pray for, threw herself on her knees:—

"But this she knows, in joys and woes, That saints will aid, if men will call— For the blue sky bends over all."

For the first time in her life she experienced a feeling of selfdegradation.

"What can he think of me!" she murmured. "He never talked to me, but brother-like; and when he gave me this token, he looked to be sure, but it was only a look after all. And then to hear that I kept it sacred, with the holy scapular and crucifix! I'll not keep it so any longer," she continued, hastily unknotting with trembling fingers the slender ribbon.

She drew the little trinket nearly off the string; half a dozen threads more, and it would have fallen to the ground; tears, round and eloquent, as they poured on the cherished gift,

told more than a thousand words could have expressed. After a long pause, she guided it slowly back to its former place,—silently replacing it in her bosom.

"He has done nothing to offend me," she thought—" and why should I revenge my own fault on the poor little keep-sake? Sure it can do me no harm!" Women's hearts are sadly prone to deceive, not others, but themselves.

Alick's love-tale was not long telling. His aunt, with woman's shrewdness, had suspected there was more than brotherly and sisterly affection between the youthful pair; and his uncle had often thought that it would be a good plan to direct all the family property, which for persons in their situation of life was considerable, into the right channel. The catholic prejudice against first cousins marrying was the only objection that presented itself to all parties.

"Goold'ill get a Dispensation, uncle," said Alick—"Goold, the bright goold "ill do it—priest or bishop can't stand that, by no manner o'means."

- "May-be so, may-be so," replied Sullivan; "but there's y'er own father and mother—to say nothing of Mary—they must all be consulted."
- "Sure they love her, like their own hearts' blood," said the youth; "and as to Mary—ask her—I know now that she loves me; though I never could dare even to guess at it till this day."
- "Ye're mighty sure always, of what is by no means certain, you men," observed Jessie. "Mary gave you no encouragement to-day, to my certain knowledge; for I wasn't away from her for five minutes since sunrise."
- "You stuck pretty close, indeed, I'll grant that for you, Jessie, which I can't say I thought particular genteel; but I won't quarrel with ye for it; for only for you, I'd never have found out the token she wore round her neck."
- "Ho, ho!—and it was you gave her that, and she never to tell me; and me told her all about my bachelors, three and four at a time! Oh, I had no thought she was so close!"

- "True love is never talkative," observed the mother, "but I don't approve of love-tokens, at all, at all."
- "Whisht, Nelly, astore," retorted the father. "Ye forget the red love-knots, and the blue, and the ginger-bread-husband, and the Dublin cap, I brought you myself, when we were in the same way: so, go to poor Mary, agra; and don't seem to know anything of the token; and my brother and I 'ill go up to Father Cormack to-morrow, and try the only means to bring him to rason. And go home to bed, boys," (Watty had seated himself in the chimney corner after supper, apparently heedless of the conversation) "and pray to the Holy Fathers and the Saints to give ye their blessing, and look over ye."
- "Let me just go to the door, and bid Mary good night, through the chink," entreated the lover: "It 'ill be such a relief to my heart, just to hear her say, 'God bless you, Alick!"

Alick, upon this point, would have his way; and the gentle response he longed for came upon his ear like fairy music.

As they retreated from the beloved cottage, Walter looked earnestly in his brother's face—"So, ye want me to have no cousin Mary!—and marriage puts coldness between born brothers—and Watty has no comfort but—"The poor fellow burst into tears.

- "You don't understand it, machree. When Mary, by the blessing o' God, will be my wife, she will be your sister, and you shall live with us if you like, and Mary will love ye even better than she does now."
- "And give me red neckerchers, and let me tend her flowers, and plait my Sunday frills, and all—and be my sister, and you my brother still?"
 - "And love ye ten times more than ever, Watty!"
- "Huzza!—then I'm for the wedding in earnest, and let me see who'll oppose it!" And both brothers entered the mill-house just as the full moon had risen high, giving light and glory to the attendant clouds.

The next morning the elder Sullivans—their drab great coats garnished with huge brass buttons; their Sunday gear from top to toe brushed and polished up; and their yellow Dublin wigs carefully placed over their own reddish hair—each mounted on a sleek, fat nag; the miller bearing before him, as a peace-offering, a sack divided in the middle, and filled, one end with cutlings, the other with white flour; while he of the Bleach Green, bore as a gift for the altar a twenty-two yard piece of "fine shirting." Thus caparisoned, thus laden, the two brothers set out to propitiate the Rev. Edward Cormack.

While they proceeded on their way, their wives met by mutual consent; and it was no common sight to witness the kindly eagerness they evinced in vying with each other, as to who should bestow most on the young couple.

For Alick and Mary, I confess they treated Jessie unhandsomely—they left her to her own meditations, and,

"Within a vale, a little vale,
Strewed with its own sweet flowers pale,
And made by steep surrounding hill
More lonely, yet more lovely still,"

they were seen, seated under a fragrant lime-tree, discoursing, I suppose, as lovers generally do; which is, I believe, saying very little, and looking—but no matter—Mary's satisfied and happy countenance told that the bitterness of self-reproach was past; for Alick, she now knew, had always loved her, with a love passing the love of kindred.

"Thank ye, thank ye kindly, good neighbours and parishioners," said Father Neddy, when the Sullivans and their burthens were fairly entered into his abode: "God'ill reward ye for thinking of the poor lone priest. Molly, take care o' the meal, and prime care o' the linen. I've hardly a tack of a shirt to my back, and the skin's worn off my bones with the sackcloth and ashes for the sins of the people: but it's dacent to wear fine linen on a Sunday."

The brothers, encouraged by their reception, explained the nature of their mission, and were much astounded at the reply of the wily priest.

"There's no people in the parish I'd sooner oblege, but it's clane out o' rason—against the Mosaic, Christian, and what's more, Holy Roman law. In the eyes o' heaven, and her handmaid, the church, they are all as one, as born brother and sister. Did ye never hear what the blessed council o' Trint said? But how should ye, poor ignorant men!—don't look angry, boys, dear—I mean ignorant of spiritual, not temporal matters—how should ye know anything about it? It will be next to a clane impossibility to get the sowls o' one of the family out of purgatory, if so be 'ye let such a marriage take place, seeing that ye've been' all aiders and abetters in such a contempt of the glorious commandments."

"But, y'er reverence—sure, y'erself married Andrew Bonner's niece and son."

"True for ye: ye've a good memory, Corney-a grate blessing as it's applied-true for ye. May-be ye don't understand our infallibility—infallibility of the spirit it manes, which wars against the flesh, and the flesh against it; and sometimes, ye see, when the spirit sleeps, the flesh (which, you understand, has, even in holy men, a spice of the ould boy in it, seeing it is of the earth, earthy—oh, what it is to know the Scriptures, as one may say, by God's act o' parliament, which we do!) goes wandering, and sometimes wrong. And even I, y'er parish priest, had to do pinnance for that wedding; and ye may believe it, that to this moment, notwithstanding the lashin's o' silver—to say nothing of the powers o' gould-spent for his sake, Andrew Bonner's sowl is much too warm at this moment; only that's between you and me and the wall. See how Providence turns things! Ye thought that wedding made for ye, and it's quite the other way. Tin!-I wouldn't grant you a dispensation for twinty guineas, nor twinty, nor twinty, nor twinty, and that's fourscore—see that now! So, go home—repent o' y'er

sins. Send Mary to me, till I rason with her—she's a Godfearing girl, and 'ill listen to rason, wonderfully for a woman
—and keep y'er house in order, and teach y'er children the
grate first law—obadience. And I'll make it my own business to look out a wife for Alick. Not a word more—it's no
use. Sure ye wouldn't ge aginst the priest!—begone, both
of ye, and take my blessing along with ye; and now I'll go
finish my matins." And Father Neddy Cormack sank down
on the hassock in front of the great chair, and, to quote
a favourite expression of his own, "peppered away at the
prayers."

The brothers did not utter a word as they rode homewards, but exchanged looks of mournful import as they saw Alick running forward to meet them—hope and joy animating his every movement—the wandering, affectionate Walter following his footsteps, and as eager almost as his brother to hear the news. It needed not telling—and both father and uncle were affected to tears, at the deep and earnest anguish which overspread, as a pall, the countenance of poor Alick.

"And was it for this she loved me—and was it for this I thought of her day and night—and would the Almighty suffer an unholy love to enter into such a girl as Mary, who looks more like an angel than an earthly woman? Oh, Mary, Mary, I can never see you more! Father—uncle—don't gainsay me. I'll go to sea—I can't remain at home!"

With such-like exclamations, and much bitterness of heart, they arrived at the mill. Mary's father, in a little time, went home; and it seemed as if the sad intelligence he brought had transformed his daughter into a marble statue; the colour forsook her cheek, her limbs stiffened, and they laid her on her humble couch, as one from whom the spirit had well nigh departed.

To persons unacquainted with the power once possessed by the priesthood, over the minds and actions of the Irish peasantry, such submission to the will of one man, and such a man as Father Cormack, may appear extraordinary; but those who remember the influence they had, and exercised, not a great many years ago, will be fully aware of its overwhelming extent. Most sincerely do I believe that it was in general exerted, not for evil, but for good; and it is, perhaps, matter of astonishment that "they bore their faculties so meekly."

The day after the priest's decision, Alick and Mary avoided each other, as if by mutual consent; and as the evening approached, the poor girl wandered to the little vale that had been so lately the scene of her innocent hopes, and seated herself under the very lime-tree where she had sat with her lover.

She was roused from her reverie by no other than Stephen Cormack, who, in a tone that sounded to her ear like an insult, said, "he was very sorry to find her so lonesome, but glad to get spaking to her on something that concerned them both."

Mary rose up with what might be trully called dignity, and replied, "she knew of nothing that could concern them both."

"Oh, truth and honesty, Miss Mary! I haven't been coming after ye these two years, and you not know my honourable intintions. Sure, it's Mrs. Stephen Cormack I want ye to be; and bring ye mistress over my uncle's house, who can lay down goold for goold with y'er father. Ye needn't look so scornful either; there's as good grass in the meadow as ever was mowed."

"Stephen Gormack," said Mary, "if I looked as you say, I didn't mean it. In whatever way a man proposes marriage to a woman, he does her honour; and I am grateful as I can be for what you have mentioned—but plain speaking is best. Were you king of England, or Emperor of all France, and I a poor lone outcast from home and family, I would lay my head under that tree, and die, sooner than be your wife."

"And more fool you, for that same!" he retorted, bitterly.

"It's not-every one would have ye now, after you and y'er born first cousin been spoken of over the parish for company-keeping."

"I seek no man's love," replied Mary, calmly; "but a woman calls you coward Stephen Cormack, for daring to say to her, when no friend's by, what, if even her humble housedog were resting at her feet, you wouldn't dare spake."

As she uttered the words she turned away towards the path that led to her home; but the young man seized her hand, and sought to detain her.

"What would ye with me, Stephen?—you know my mind; and ye know that Mary Sullivan is not given to change."

"Jist listen, Mary;—you and Alick never can be one in this world; and where 'ill ye find a boy that loves ye better than myself?"

"You have y'er answer, Sir; and if you have my contempt, instead of my pity, ye may thank y'erself."

"Then, by the Holy Fathers, ye shall bitterly repent this treatment; and as I'm a living man, Mary, I'll see the day yet, when ye'll kneel for me to marry ye, and lie at my marcy, like that clod o' turf!"

The fellow kicked the green sward in illustration of his words; but at the same moment was extended at Mary's feet, by a blow from the stout shillala of our faithful ally, Walter, who appeared, as it were, from the bosom of the earth, to avenge the insult offered to his cousin. The anger of the half-witted man, once excited, was not easily quelled. He repeated the blow, even while Mary was clinging to his arm, and would have persisted in his vengeance, had she not roused her energies, and commanded him to forbear. She hastened home, almost dragging Watty with her, and sent her father to convey the priest's nephew to his dwelling; but when he arrived at the glen, Stephen was no where to be found.

Mary retired early to her chamber that night; but sleep deserts the unhappy and unfortunate. It was not so with

Jessie: the light-hearted girl slept as if she had never known and never could know either care or sorrow.

The family, at length, were all at rest. Mary arose from her bed, and opened the little casement, thinking the fresh breezes of night would cool her fevered brain. She thought a shadow passed across the yard, and even rested on the humble shrubs that Alick, in happier times, had planted. She listened—the house-dog did not bark, nor could she hear a single footstep; but the shadow returned—approached. She shut-to the window hastily, and the noise it made evidently apprized the intruder that some one watched his ramblings. The bushes were separated, and, to her relief and astonishment, she recognised Walter's well-known face, peering upwards. Again she opened it, and inquired if anything had happened at the mill.

"Whisht, agra, whisht—why a'n't you at rest?—I wouldn't have been here, only I thought I could wish you a silent good night, under y'er windy. And I wint my rounds, and found my little birds sleeping and happy. An' it's rejoiced I am to see ye; and now the moon's coming out clear, you can see me too. I don't look like a fool now—do I, Mary?—fit to visit a King—a'n't I?"

Watty was, indeed, metamorphosed. Over his usual gear he had buttoned his father's grey coat; and his brother's hat surmounted the scarlet kerchief he always wore round his head; he had also drawn on his father's top boots, and brandished his uncle's heavy whip in his hand.

"I've saddled Alick's poney," he continued, in a half whisper; "It's a merry bit of flesh, and follows me like a dog. And, Mary, a lannen! I'm going on a long journey—and jist clasp y'er two hands in the moonbames, and bless me, bless me!—and pray that God 'ill increase my wit jist for twenty-four hours; and thin He may take it back agin, for I've sense enough to see that it's the innocent things that's happiest in this world. Do, Mary, bless me!—ye ought, if ye knew but all; for it's for his sake and yours that I'm going."

The affectionate creature knelt as devoutly as if he solicited the prayers of the Virgin Mother, while his cousin, astonished at what was so inexplicable, implored him to explain his meaning.

"Bid God direct me, Mary! I haven't words to make ye understand what I'm after; but I know my own know, and there's the charm of a secret!—and the poney's calling me:—give me the blessing, or I must go without it—and keep up y'er heart—and may be the little sense that I have, stir'd for good, will turn out better than a great mountain o' sense, not stir'd at all."

Mary gave the blessing so earnestly implored. The instant it was delivered, Walter was out of sight; and in a few moments she heard the well-known trot of Alick's poney, tripping along the high road that skirted the Bleach Green.

The succeeding day passed very gloomily in both houses. No one could conjecture Walter's purpose, or whither he was gone. He seldom rode, though he rambled occasionally, far from home, and visited family connexions even in the North, where he was always a welcome guest; for the strange mixture of keenness and simplicity that formed the distinguishing feature of his wandering mind, rendered him, when in a talkative mood, very entertaining; and above all, the skill and taste he evinced in singing national ballads ensured him a kindly welcome in every cottage.

The evening was dult and rainy; and the night set in with the cold shivering feel, so unnatural in summer time.

Sullivan occupied the "ingle nook"—his legs stretched out—his arms folded, except when he raised his hand to relight or fill his pipe—that constant companion of Irish rest or reflection. His wife busied herself about household matters—Jessie was retrimming her Leghorn bonnet—and Mary sat spinning opposite her father. Her foot moved as swiftly as usual, and her fingers twisted the delicate thread, as if her mind had regained its tranquillity; but it was evident, from the varying expression of her countenance, that—

"—Many, and sad, and deep,
Were the thoughts folded in her silent breast."

"Come, Jessie," said the father, "sing us a song; not too merry, nor too sorrowful; and, may-be, my little lark here will join you in it."

Mary replied with a sweet smile; but, nevertheless, her voice was not heard in the simple lay.

- "Come, girls," said the father, "come—it's time to go to bed, darlints!—God send us a fine sun-rise!"
- "And a happier one than we've had lately," added Mrs. Sullivan. "There's something come over the house that's turned everything."
- "May the Holy Saints protect us!" said Mary: "Somehow, I feel loath to go to bed—there's a weight on my heart, and a mournful sounding in my ears—I wish day-light was come!"
- "See there, now, what you put in the child's head, Nelly, with y'er croaking! Whatever present trouble we have, Mary, my blessing, I feel that for your sake it will all pass. The lord sent ye just like a delicate plant of sweet scent among u.—a thing to mind and love; and now, agra, when the winter and storm have gone over, and the little plant has grown, and budded, and blossomed, it wouldn't be natural (and he that made Nature 'ud never turn against it) to cut it down."
- "It may wither, father," murmured Mary, looking mournfully in her parent's face.
- "It shall not wither, while I've a heart to press it to, or an arm to shelter it," he exclaimed, folding her to his bosom; and if tears did mingle in that pure and holy embrace, Corney Sullivan was neither less brave nor less manly for it.

The inmates of the Bleach House had long retired to rest, when Mrs. Sullivan started from her sleep, and shaking her husband violently, asked him if he had not heard a scream. Before he could reply, "Father—Father!" was shricked,

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with all the wildness of despair—and, merciful Providence! -in Mary's voice. He rushed to his room door, and endeavoured to force it open, but he strained every nerve in vain. Like many doors in Irish cabins, it opened from the outside; and it was evident that heavy pressure had been resorted to, to prevent its being pushed forward. Again the mournful wail, "Father!-Father!" burst upon his ear. stormed in impotent rage—he conjured those without, by every holy and sacred tie, to let him go forth. He then bethought him of the little window that opened on the thatch. -Alas! his head could hardly pass through the aperture. With frenzied eagerness he endeavoured to tear out the casement, even as a maniac attempts to rive his fetters. length he succeeded; and the mud wall crumbled beneath his hands. He listened—the affecting words were not repeated: within, the sound of footsteps had ceased, but suddenly without all was bustle; and as he renewed his exertions. the tramp of horsemen came heavily upon the ear. Again he flew to the door; it was unfastened; extended on the earthen floor of the kitchen, he beheld Jessie in a state of perfect insensibility; he rushed to the fore-court-even the sound of the horses' hoofs had died in the distance; he sped to his brother's house—they were not long in coming to his assistance, and accompanied him, speedily, to the plundered nest. His wife's state of mind may be better conceived than described; and the only account Jessie could give of the outrage was, that she was roused from her sleep by masked and armed men entering their chamber, and that, despite her efforts, they rolled a horseman's cloak round her cousin, and dragged her forth.

To rouse the neighbours—saddle, spur, and away after the lawless plunderers, was the universal resolve. It may readily be believed that Alick was foremost in exertion; but the ruffians had anticipated pursuit. The saddles in the sheds, dignified by the name of stables, at both houses, were cut to pieces; and a brown farm-horse, with the exception of Alick's poney the only good roadster in their possession, was cruelly maimed.

"Oh, if Watty had been here, this could not have happened!" they exclaimed; "he has the ear of a hare, the foot of a hound, and the eye of an eagle;" but it was vain. And the grey morning had almost dawned, before a party, consisting of seven tolerably well-mounted and well-armed men, sallied forth in pursuit of the lost treasure. Various were the conjectures as to the probable authors of the abduction, and the course the miscreants had pursued. The Sullivans were silent on the former topic, but seemed to opine that Mary had been carried towards the very lawless neighbourhood of Keenahan's wood.

The crime of conveying the daughters of respectable farmers from their own homes, and forcing them to marry, frequently persons whom they had never seen, was at one time not at all uncommon in Ireland; even in my own quiet district, I remember, about sixteen years ago, a circumstance of the kind that made a powerful impression on my youthful mind, although there was much less of villany about it than characterized "the lifting" of Mary Sullivan. Unfortunately, the friends of the perpetrators, on such occasions, seem to argue themselves into the belief, that when such affairs terminate in marriage no evil has been committed.

The parties agreed to separate—four to pursue the byroads, leading to a wild district of morass and hill, called Keenahan's wood; and three, the more direct and better known way, to the same place, in another direction. The neighbourhood of Keenahan's wood had been famed as the residence of a sort of Catholic Gretna-green Irish priest—a jovial out-cast friar, who laughed, and poached, and married. Although none of the regular clergy associated with him, he concluded all sorts of run-away and forced matches; it was, therefore, natural to suppose that Mary had been borne in that direction. Alick, his father, and two friends, took the former road; and Corney Sullivan, and two others, the

latter. As they passed Cormack's house, Alick looked fixedly at it; and his father almost involuntarily exchanged glances with him, when they perceived a head, which could not be mistaken, withdrawn from one of the windows, and an open shutter closed.

- "Father Neddy's early at his devotion," observed Alick, in a low and bitter tone.
- "I wonder what he thinks of seeing so many of us astir in the dim o' the morning," replied the other.
- "May-be he knows by inspiration," continued the youth, with increasing bitterness; "but if it is as I think, I'll drive, and tear, and throw open—ay, the very altar; and I'll have justice and revenge before I lay side on a bed, or taste drink stronger nor water."
- "Whisht! for mercy's sake, whisht!" exclaimed the father: "wait awhile, and don't be so rash."

They stopped at every hamlet—they questioned every individual, but for many miles received no intelligence. At last, a beggar-woman who had slept under shelter of a ditch during the night, and was, to use her own phrase, "getting the children to rights, and making them comfortable," said, that about two hours before, three men had gone that way—she had looked up, upon hearing them pass—"they were riding aisy," and one of them carried a slight woman before him on the horse, "which struck her strange," as she lay more like a dead than a living thing. They took off the high road across the bog, in the direction of Keenahan's wood; "and she soon lost sight of 'em, as daylight wasn't clane in."

Our friends followed the track she told of, and heard again from some turf-clampers that the same party had passed them about an hour before. The information, however, did not appear to increase the chance of their search being crowned by success. In the direction pointed out by the turf-cutters all trace of road was lost; the ground was uneven, and they were obliged to lead their horses. Scrubby,

and often gigantic furze, thickened on the borders of the wood, so as to present almost a positive barrier to their progress; while every now and then, a deep pit-fall, or a treacherous shaking bog, impeded their course; and it required all their strength and dexterity to extricate themselves from the clayey thickness of the soil.

Keenahan's wood showed darkly in the distance, as it crept up the Slivoath mountain, whose craggy top frowned amid the thin and fleecy clouds.

"There can be no harm," observed the elder Sullivan, "in going to Friar Leary's: sorra' a job of the kind done that he hasn't a hand in; and something tells me we shall soon find our lost lamb."

It was agreed that one of the party should take charge of the horses, while the others proceeded slowly and cautiously on foot, under cover of the wood. They could not expect any information from the beings who inhabited the dreary and dangerous district they now entered, as they were generally believed to subsist by plunder; for, in times of national tumult, suspicious persons always found shelter in the fastnesses of Slivoath, and many bloody acts of violence had been perpetrated under the dense trees.

The few half-naked urchins whom they met, either pretended total ignorance of the friar's dwelling, or, as they afterwards discovered, invariably set them wrong. Thus, fatigued in body and mind, they struggled through the tangled brush-wood; and although the sun was high in the heavens, its rays could hardly penetrate the deep thickness of the matted trees.

A broad and brawling stream, occasionally bubbling and frothing over the impediments that huge stones and ledges presented to its impetuosity, divided the path (if the course they had pursued might be so called), and formed an opening, where the air, relieved from its wearisome confinement, rushed in a swift, pure current over the waters. The banks, on the opposite side, were steep and dangerous. Huge

masses of the mountain rock, round whose base the stream meandered, rose abruptly from the surface: some were fringed by the thorny drapery of the wild briar and ragged nettle; others were bleak and barren, and the sunbeams glittered on flints, and portions of red granite, that, like many of the worldly, basked in the sun of prosperity, and yielded no thing in return.

The party followed the course of the mimic river, and the mountain grew higher as they proceeded. The depth of the water, too, had evidently increased, probably owing to the late rains; for it washed over a rustic bridge, well known in the district by the name of "the friar's pass," and which, as they rightly conjectured, led to the abode of "the Irish Friar Tuck."

Above this simple structure, that consisted of two huge trees tied together, a portion of the mountain jutted, and formed a semi-arch of wild and singular beauty. Its summit was thickly imbedded in bright and shining moss, and its glittering greenery was a delightful relief to the eye that had so long dwelt on noisome weeds and rugged rocks.

While the little party were gazing on the fairy spot, a loud shout thundered on their ears: for a moment they were petrified; and then involuntarily rushed to cross the bridge. Their progress, however, was arrested by the scene that presented itself, in what, as they gazed for a moment upon it, appeared mid-air: Walter Sullivan-his black hair streaming like a pennon on the breeze-in eager pursuit of Stephen Cormack, who seemed anxious to gain the path that descended to the stream; but with another shout, or rather howl, Watty sprang on him, as the eagle would on the hawk, and both engaged in a fierce and despe. rate struggle. Neither were armed, but the fearful effort for existence gave strength to Stephen's exertions. the ferocity of tigers they clutched each other's throats and as they neared the edge the half-maniac redoubled his exertions to throw his weaker antagonist over it. Alick and

his father flew up the cliff; nothing but the supernatural energy with which Walter was imbued could have saved Cormack's life. He had succeeded in loosening the hold upon his throat, and then, taking him round the waist as if he had been an infant, upheld him, for a moment, over the abyss, and hurled him forward; had he been pushed over, his doom must have been instant death, the pointed rocks would have mangled him into a thousand pieces; but the crime that would have attached to the hitherto "harmless innocent," was providentially prevented, and Stephen fell into the stream.

The combat I have taken so long to relate occupied but a few seconds—before the worthless youth's associates in crime were able to effect his rescue.

Where the wild man had wandered shall be presently related; he was on his return, and by way of shortening his road, determined on crossing Slivoath and the wood; he came unexpectedly upon the gang, who had been obliged to dismount, and were forcing his sweet cousin Mary up the narrow and winding path, leading to the hut or cell where the friar resided; armed with but his riding-whip, he instantly fell upon them, and as "conscience doth make cowards of us all"-they at first imagined they were overtaken by the party, which, notwithstanding their precautions, they had little doubt would muster with the morning dawn. The eagerness evinced by Walter to punish the principle aggressor has been already shown, but it was fortunate for him that his friends arrived at the critical moment; he could have had little chance of escape, as the other ruffians had recovered from their surprise, and doubtless would have had slight scruples of concience about despatching him.

Mary was soon surrounded by her friends, for her father and the men who had taken the other road joined them shortly after the rencontre had taken place.

Alick's poney was invaluable; the creature seemed to know its way by intuition, and had now the honour of

carrying Mary. Alick guided the bridle, while her father supported her with his arm. Stephen's object had evidently been to force a marriage; and had the rescue been delayed a few minutes longer, his plan might have been successful.

"It's no time to talk of it now," observed Alick; "but I'll have my revenge yet. I'll go to the Bishop—and if that won't do, to the Pope; and I'll have that man——"

"Alick, avourneen!" interrupted Walter, "if it's no time to talk, can't you hould y'er tongue?"—look, i've no manner of compassion for any of ye; this very minute, the only people to be pitied is jist me and the poney—who's as good as gould, and goes as smilingly along as if he hadn't travelled near seventy miles, since ere last night;—then I pity myself, because I'm a fool—and so, I suppose, can never have a sweetheart, but must live alone, like that great poplar tree, that even the birds fly by without resting upon. It's very quare, I never found even a sparrow's nest in a poplar!"

"Do tell us where you've been, Watty!" inquired Alick, anxious to change the conversation.

"All in good time—not till we get home; and mind, uncle, at the Bleach House ye must give us all supper; and Mary, if ye're not able to sit up, I'll support ye—but to rest not one of ye shall go, till ye've heard my travels."

"Some folly, I'll go bail," observed his father.

Walter looked at him-nodded, but only replied, "time 'ill tell."

The day was fully spent, and the gentle twilight had been succeeded by the deepening darkness of night; gradually the pale stars came out in their meek beauty, illuminating the blue arch of heaven with their sparkling fires. The party were too fatigued to keep up any conversation, always excepting Walter, whose spirits were overflowing, and who sung snatches of old ballads with untiring pemseverance. When they came within sight of the village, through which they must pass before they arrived at the Sullivans' home, the party halted and gave three loud cheers; in a moment

every living soul, even to the toddling wee thing hanging to its mother's apron, rushed as with one feeling to meet and congratulate them; the joyous shout spread even to the silent dwelling where the mother of Mary, sick and despairing, was rocking herself over the ashes of the turf fire. Jessie had joined the villagers, and, in her boisterous happiness, kissed and embraced every one she encountered.

But who can relate the meeting of the mother and daughter!—how the aged woman laid the pale girl on her bosom, pushed back from her delicate features the clustering and disarranged tresses; again and again pressed her lips on her fair brow, and repeated over and over the sweet words, "My child, my own born child, is safe!—my child, my own born child, is safe!" Nor was her aunt less fervent in her demonstrations of affection.

In the excessive joy of this happy restoration, few thought of the sorrow that still weighed on the hearts of Alick and Mary. Nor was it until Watty had three times shaken his aunt by the shoulder, and demanded supper for himself and his companions, that the poor woman would resign her child.

"Ye're keening over her as if she were dead—so ye are—and I want my supper; for after that I've got a message for his Reverence, Father Neddy, that I swore to give afore I'd lay side on a bed this happy night."

Rashers of bacon, fresh eggs, new milk, strong ale, and plenty of hot whisky punch, formed the regale.

"Jessie," said Mrs. Sullivan, "if ye were handy now, ye wouldn't be long twisting the necks of five or six chickens, and they'd do iligantly in the red ashes."

"No, no!" vociferated Walter, "I'll not stay in the house if a living thing is made dead this aight. I've got the means of making ye all kings and queens; one round, loud huzza—now a glass a-piece—and now for a fool's toast—'May ould Nick make the bed of all who contrive mischief!' Aliek, come here, agra—read that, astore! I never saw the good.

of teaching people to dirty clane paper, until I got that scrap from his high Reverence, Doctor O'Brien—Bishop of this and other districts."

All stared in stupid astonishment, as Alick took the proffered document; he unfolded it, but kept the contents most religiously to himself; it was soon evident he could not read it aloud; his cheek flushed—his eye kindled—his hand trembled; yet still he held it fast, as if fearful that if aught touched it, save himself, the illusion would be destroyed.

"Give it me, Alick," said Walter, taking it from him, "give it me. Now, father, read it. I know what it is—but I'd like to hear it set out regularly. Why, you look as much bothered as Alick—now for it!"

The father did indeed read—what gave entire happiness to the entire party—a dispensation, under the bishop's own hand, fully authorising the marriage of Alick and Mary Sullivan. The ecstasies, and happiness, and, above all, the gratitude felt and spoken, can be much better imagined than described.

Astonishment was loudly and universally expressed, as to the how and the where of Walter's plans. Watty, however, was never long in one mood, and he seemed disposed to hold his tongue, just at the moment they wished him to be particularly communicative.

"Let Mary ask him—let Mary ask him to tell, and he will!" said Jessie.

"May-be I might then; if she'd ask me purty, and call me brother." This was obviously a difficult task for the blushing bride-elect; but on Watty's placing his ear very near her lips, she, I suppose, complied, for he seemed satisfied; and seating himself on the table, in the middle of his animated and delighted auditory, recited his adventures.

"Ye mind Dr. O'Brien's sister's son, who is to be a priest, and was staying for a while at the squire's—well, he was very kind to me, as you may remember; and took a power

o' pains to insense me into many things, and was desperate civil to me all thro', and often wanted me to go up to his uncle's place; indeed, I think he'd ha' made a priest o' me, if he had his will ;--ye may laugh--but sure it's faith is the great thing in a priest; and, father, if ye had given me the larning, I'd ha' been a jewil of a priest; but no mattersomehow, it came across me, that Father Neddy took too much entirely upon himself, about the dispensation." (Here a general "Oh, oh, Watty!"—"asy, Watty!" murmured amid the hearers.) "If ye don't let me tell my story my own way, ye may do without it," said the orator; "I'm not afraid to repate it-like many others in the world, he took too much upon himself-save us !-don't worms ate priests' flesh, as well as ours? There now, Mary, honey, if it vexes you I won't brathe a morsel more about it! Well, I bethought me I'd jist make myself dacent, and go unknowingly, and lay the whole case before his holiness, the bishop; seeing I was sure o' the good word of my ould play-fellow, his sister's son: so I set off, as you know-but you don't know that when I got to his house-my darlints!-it's off he was-a big piece the other side o' Keenahan's wood, and my honourable friend with him, going a 'visiting' for a bit. Well, I took after him-Rory and me-and of coorse I first axed to see the young gentleman; and sure he's the ould thing, only a dale more stout and hearty; and-I'm sorry for him -very much given to shooting queests, which I tould him was very unchristian." (Here another "Oh! oh! oh!" burst forth, but Walter continued.) "Well, he has a kind heart! -he remembered all of ve; and said my family was at the top of the country for dacency. So he brought me straight to his uncle, and wouldn't put me up what to say-only bid me tell my story my own way; and then I thought o' the blessing you gave me, Mary, and spoke up, nothin' daunted. He's a fine man, the bishop, as you'd see in a month o' Sunday's; tall, like a mountain ash, with hair as white as the foam o' the waves, and a voice so soft,—yet so grand! 'Did

you say,' says he, in fine English, 'that the girl and bey have grown up under one roof, and taken heart-love to each other from their early years?' I remember his very words.

- "'Jist, y'er grate reverence,' I made answer, 'like two birds in a pigeon's nest; and a cool look, nor a hard thought, has never come betwixt one of the family.'
- "I wonder why Father Cormack should so go against it,' says he again.
- "If y'er honour's glory 'ill permit, I'll tell ye,' says I. 'He has a bit of a nevvy that's taken a wonderful fancy to Mary's face and Mary's farm—his reverence knows him.' (I knew the young master had an ould grudge agin him, for a dirty turn he did.) So with that he spakes up, and says his say, out o' the face, and fitted his jacket nately, like an honourable, honest man.
 - "Well, they began talking in an unknown tongue, after the fashion of a batch of crows—caw—click—caw—caw—and at last the bishop says, 'You know that a Dispensation is a grate expinse, and those who expect the like favours from the Church must help to support it.'
 - "'To be sure,' says I, 'but as I mane all this a surprise—and thinking of the state the craturs are both in, dying with such a complaint, and all, I trust y'er reverence's holiness will be light upon me.'
 - "Sure, I'd have given hundreds for it," exclaimed Alick.
- "It's you 'ud be the fool then," observed Walter; "It 'ud be no better for that—I pulled out my bag—(I had five guineas in all)—"
 - "Where did ye get the money?" inquired his father.
 - "Don't ye remember," replied the young man, "that whenever my head is steady enough to do a turn o' work, ye pay me for it?—and I saved it all up—for my heart tould me that some o' ye might want it, one of these days; wild Watty has no right to it—for sure he's been a pain or a reproach to ye all his life—little better than a born natural." The tone of deep feeling, with which the poor fellow uttered these words,

contrasted painfully with his former cheerful voice; it was like the tolling of a funeral knell, even while the sound of joy-bells lingered on the air; but after a brief pause, he resumed:

- "'Five guineas,' said the bishop, 'is the lowest penny.'
- "'Och, murder!-y'er honour's reverence 'ud never think of that, sure!' said I-' three guineas and a half-I'd scorn, poor as I am, to offer ye trash o' paper) I'll give that any how.' Well, he considered a bit, and the two began the cicaw-cawing, in the foreign language, which I own I didn't think manners—except for quality—to be sure they've ways of their own-well, he offers me the thing for four guineas; and done, says I, and tould it down to him on the sod, honest, as the saying is, as a judge. Well (now listen, boys, for the flower of the story)! he takes up the gould, and he looked at me somehow-so kind that my heart went bob-bobbing -and my eyes felt quare. 'Take it back,' said he-and with that he handed it across to me-'and keep it to buy a wedding shute, and an ould man prays that at the day o' judgment all may make as clane breasts as you have now; keep the money, and there's the Dispensation.'

"Now, boys and girls," added Watty, grinning—" ish't it the hoight o' condescension in me to be discoursing you here—after talking face to face to a bishop? Look at me, I've seen one of the world's wonders—a priest return money!—but I expect to see another—a wife that won't scowld. Ye all know the rest," he added, when the merry laugh had subsided, excited by his last remark; "how I was returning by way of a short cut through the wood, and—but where's the good o' going back, as ye say that spillogue of a villain got off?—well, may-be so best—only I don't like to think of it."

After many demonstrations of Irish joy, which I beg it clearly to be understood is much more hoisterous than sober English custom would warrant, and various congratulations, the party separated.

"Now I'm off to the priest," exclaimed Watty.

"You're not, take my word for it," replied his father; "what 'ud you go to the priest at this hour for?"

"Jist to do the bishop's bidding—sorra' a thing else—didn't he tell me to tell Father Neddy, with his compliments, that he'd be with him the morrow?—and—by the powers I clane forgot it!—he said he'd have the pleasure of marrying Mary and Alick, his holy self, the next day."

As he concluded this sentence, there commenced in the cottage a confusion of tongues, and noises not easily described. Mary, who had been exchanging a few parting words with her lover on the narrow step leading to her little chamber, leaned against the rail for support; the only face that beamed unalloyed pleasure, and the perfection of happiness, was Alick's—he pressed Mary's hand closely to his heart; and then, with a delicacy of feeling that would add a new grace to any rank, however exalted it might be, beekoned Jessie to assist her to her room; and, giving utterance to the joy and hope which filled his bosom, gently and affectionately bade her good night.

"It's quite an impossibility! Watty, ye'll never come to good for not telling us afore—sure that was the first thing ye should ha' thought of;" said the father of Mary.

"A bishop, body and bones, coming to marry a child o' mine!" exclaimed the mother; and not a thing in the house!—the hens in the laying time—thin as frosty snipeens; and the chickens not as big as larks! Sorra' a grain o' tea have we, nor a drop o' wine—it can't be, that's sartin!"

There was too much anxious conversation going forward in the kitchen, for Jessie to remain long in Mary's room; from which she soon flounced forth, exclaiming, "It's out o' the question; and a dirty turn o' ye, Watty, not to tell it at once, and ye more nor two hours in the house; and not a stitch o' book muslin to be had nearer nor Ballybay, nor so much as a yard o' satin ribbon. Oh, joy be with you, sweet Dublin!—one has only to cross a street, and the most beautifulest o' things for funerals or weddings are to y'er hand.

If y'er pockets are full o' money, sure it's there ye can empty them, and that without ony throuble to signify; while here, one may live for ages, and see nothin' worth dressing for—nothin' but the likes o' ye, Watty, and folk too busy in love to think of any but thimselves, and a pack of old fogies that I wouldn't be seen spaking to in darlint Dublin."

"Ye're wrong, Miss Jessie," replied Walter, "in one thing; sorra' o' the likes o' me, here or elsewhere, ye'll ever see. As to Dublin, or any other place, you girls 'ill contrive to spend y'er money, if ye have it; but look—I'll go off in the morning to Ballybay, and bring ye as much finery as ye want—and tay, and sugar, and wine, and everything—for a wedding we must have; and now I'm off to the priest's."

The miller accompanied his son; and neither family went to bed that night, so busy were they with preparations for the coming feast—for in that light an Irish wedding is always considered. After the seniors had maturely deliberated on the affair, it was an agreed-upon-matter that it was perfectly impossible to put off a priest, much less a bishop; and I confess myself unable to describe the extreme preparations that consequently occupied the next morning, day, and night. Such doings had never been heard of in the country. Literally, the fatted calf was killed; and Walter executed his commissions to the satisfaction of every body, except Jessie, for he brought her white calico instead of muslin—declaring it was worse than mad to pay so much more money for what was no better than a cobweb.

Sweet Mary Sullivan!—she appreciated too highly the affection of Alick, the wild, devoted kindness of poor Walter, and the condescension of the bishop, to urge obstacles which she did not feel ought to exist. The desire of her heart was fulfilled—the affection that had grown with her growth was to flow on undisturbed in its unpolluted course; and she silently thanked God, and prayed that she might continue worthy of Alick's love.

To a delicately-minded woman, the wedding-day is one of mingled mournfulness and hope. To be another's—to resign to another's care her will, her happiness—to think that every feeling must be moulded to please one, who accepts her submission as a duty, not a favour—is a sacrifice, indeed; but the hope, that, in return for the homely comforts, the cheerful acquiescence, the soothing voice, the ready smile, the delightful tranquility that woman's love sheds over the humblest home,—the hope that these tendernesses will be repaid by the wise guidance, the steady counsel, the noble friendship into which the tumultuous feelings of the lover subside, when he is called husband, cheers and supports the most sensitive mind under a change so decided and entire.

Doctor O'Brien was received with slavish obsequiousness by Father Neddy Cormack, and the house was put in especial order for the purpose. He, however, declined accepting the priest's invitation to remain. He was going on to the squire's, he said, to spend the night; but hoped to have the pleasure of meeting his reverence to-morrow at the Bleach House. Father Cormack must see, he added, the necessity of his appearing there; as he had heard on his way that a very dreadful outrage had been committed on the Sullivan family, into which some inquiry must necessarily be made.

I am sorry for it—but the next day Father Neddy was at the "pint o' death wid the agee, and a smodering about his heart, and a pain in his head, and not able to touch a drop o' liquor"—according to Katty O'Flinn, who smelt the wedding preparations afar off; as did some dozens of variegated beggars, who afterwards, seated on the green sward, enjoyed the remnants of the treat—a peculiar privilege which that class of persons have enjoyed time out of mind; to them a wedding or a funeral are alike signals for feasting; and I have often been amused at the mixture of rags and happiness such gypsy-like groups present.

Need I add that our bride looked lovely—that the bridegroom was grateful for his long-sought treasure—that the bishop was gracious, and departed with the heartfelt prayers of his people? No!—but I must add that the air of that part of the country disagreed so much with Father Neddy Cormack, he soon found it necessary to "quit," for another province; and that the bishop's nephew was appointed to his parish—a circumstance at which Walter rejoiced exceedingly; the more so, as the young priest good naturedly promised to forego his once-favourite amusement of "shooting wood-queests."

PROPHET OF ST. PAUL'S.

BY LORD NORMANBY.

That " all the word's a stage" has become a trite adage—that " each man in his time plays many parts" is not more true, than that every spot of ground has, in the lapse of ages, been in turn the theatre of many a varied act. In the course of the last few centuries, the accompanying scenery and decorations with which the changeful drama of human life is ever repeated, has been often shifted with a pantomimic profusion.

It is but three hundred years ago, and (though a thousand miles from the place where these words now are written), what is more to the purpose, almost on the very spot where they will be published, that the event which I am going to commemorate happened.

So changed since then is everything around, that the local identity seems as impossible, as it used to me, when a boy, to believe that the very boards on which I had seen Siddons "and Sorrow sit," could be the same on which, half an hour afterwards, Grimaldi grinned and tumbled.

Now, on a fine summer evening, at the hour when the sun in vain attempts to force his horizontal rays through the steam of the many thousand kitchens which just then smoke between his western bed and St. Paul's churchyard; the thronged foot pavement, with its mingling myriads in search of business or of pleasure; the discordant shouts of the evening newsmen; the clang of the departing mails; the jostling ranks of drags or of drays, would all offer to

any individual who wished to escape observation that safest passport to secrecy, the solitude of an eager occupied crowd.

But on the same spot, in the month of July, 1514, the last rays of the setting sun, ere they sank behind the gable end of a low, two-storied house, in unmitigated brilliancy lighted up an obscure alley, which then stretched eastward: and upon the whole length of its pavement, there fell but one elongated shadow of a solitary female figure. She was enveloped in a sort of horsewoman's long cloak, which as completely concealed her dress and person as her hood veiled her face and head-gear, and left her rank in life doubtful; though the quality and condition of these outward garments would proclaim her, at least, in the station of a respectable merchant's family. She was above the middle height, and from the graceful folds of the drapery, when she so disposed the cloak that its inconvenient length should not impede her progress, her figure seemed slight and well Her step had the elasticity of extreme youth, though the small foot and slender ankle, which the uplifted cloak just disclosed, appeared but little used to such rough roads, as occasionally she rather slipped and tottered over the broken and uneven pavement, than picked her way with the steady tread which habit gives. She stopped before a low door at the further end of the alley, and beckoned to a negro page, who just then appeared at that corner by which she had entered, and who seemed to have been stationed there to watch if her steps had been marked by any accidental passenger. He hastily advanced towards her; when she still communicated with him only by signs; and, as they were then apparently quite alone, this imperfect mode of inquiry was more probably dictated by some natural infirmity on his part, than the dread of listeners on The page's gestures implying security, she ventured to knock at the door before which she had arrived, which was that of an astrologer or wise man, whose prophecies

were then much in vogue, though his actual residence was not generally known.

The open reception given to persons of this description by Louis XI. of France suited the inconsistent character of that weak, though wily, monarch; but was not an example likely to be frequently followed. In general, the great ones of the land, whether kings or nobles, however little they might really be able to resist an instinctive inclination to traffic with these retail dealers in futurity, felt ashamed of it, as a sort of contraband indulgence, and the professors of an art, whose influence was rather irresistibly felt than readily acknowledged, were more likely to be extravagantly rewarded than openly honoured; and were often as much paid for their silence as to the present proceedings of those who consulted them, as for their disclosures as to their future fate.

The popular pretender, to whose temporary dwelling we have conducted a female disciple, encouraged in every respect the air of mystery with which all who visited him were inclined to envelop their joint transactions. He changed his residence frequently—disappeared suddenly—and when it was again whispered where he was to be found, few knew when and whence he had come; his real name was uncertain, and the appellations by which he was known various and contradictory: his original extraction was doubtful; and all that was confidently asserted was in general terms, that he had come from the east. All this obscurity he found answered his own ends. Those who visited him under the seal of secrecy were his most liberal customers; and those who placed the most implicit faith in him owned that he was not indifferent to the rapidity with which he filled his coffers. This change of abode, also, saved him many visits from the minions of the law, whose forbearance he was sometimes obliged to purchase by refunding to their cupidity what he had extracted from the credulity of their own immediate su-The Prophet of St. Paul's was the title by which, from the situation of his new residence, he was known amongst those who, having made the discovery, whispered it to others who, like themselves, wished to profit by the knowledge.

Upon this occasion he was found, by the muffled figure whom we have conducted into his presence, seated in a study, whose whole arrangement was in such admirable keeping with the pretensions of the person who occapied it, that it appeared as if adapted for ages to similar purposes, instead of having been only recently so tenanted upon a forced change of residence. Everything in the room, even to the decorations on the walls, was connected with the art there practised. All the furniture, for whatever use intended, bore in shape some connexion with mystic signs and hieroglyphic figures: on every side were scattered in profusion, books of science, globes, and glasses; and on a shelf at the other end, were ranged various chemical preparations, in the use of which, in some of his mysteries, the tenant of this apartment was also a proficient.

The person who, under the title of the Prophet of St. Paul's received the present visitor, was seated at a table facing the entrance; and the light which came from above was so disposed as to fall upon the disciple, who usually stood opposite, and not to show so clearly the countenance of the professor, unless he purposely leaned forward; his person was enveloped in the loose robes of his art; a beard so long and profuse, that it seemed as if it must have been coeval with the first adoption of his present studies, flowed towards his girdle, and covered the lower part of his face. The complexion of the upper part was of a swarthiness almost unnatural, except in a case of constant exposure to a tropical sun; and on his head he wore a quaint and mystical sort of bonnet, also adorned with the symbols of his art. female and her attendant page presented themselves before him; a slight shade of displeasure seemed to pass over his countenance, as if the continuance of this disguise on her part indicated a want of confidence at variance with their relative

position. Without, however, noticing this farther, he asked her, concisely, "What art thou now? and what dost thou or dread or wish to be?"

She seemed to hesitate a moment, as if doubting what turn to give to her reply, and then answered, "An exile's child, who herself dreads an exile's fate."

There was something in this answer which seemed to surprise him. He leaned forward, cast upon her a penetrating glance, which her still closely drawn hood enabled her to evade: he then in succession examined two or three of the vast volumes before him—again leaned forward—fixed his eyes upon her, and uttered slowly, in a scornful tone—"Most foul is that fiction which would dress its deformity in the outward garb of truth!—Most weak is that wit which, to deceive, trusts to the ignorance of him from whom it seeks knowledge! My father's exile led to power—thine begins to honour! Mary of England, I know thee well—"

Ere these words were spoken, the hood was lowered, the cloak had fallen—both were removed by the attendant page, and the Princess Mary of England stood before him in all the first bloom of that matchless beauty which was soon to be the admiration of the assembled chivalry of Europe. Even in the awkwardness of her present situation she preserved that quiet dignity of manner for which she was remarkable, and by which persons of her order best remind others of their rank whilst seeming to forget it themselves; and as she fixed on the Astrologer the mild expression of her full blue eye, no sense of shame at detection for a moment disturbed on the serene surface of her delicate features the proper proportions of the Rival Rose, which being by birth united in her person, amicably divided between them at beauty's award the blended colouring of her transparent complexion.

"Well, father," she said, "your knowledge of the present is no longer disputed; now for the future—this marriage, must it be?"

"In answer to that question, I do not in thy case as I should.

of one of the common herd, ask to know the day, the hour, nay the very minute of thy birth. That minute and every one of thy after life—a painful pre-eminence thou mayest find it—is public property. Thine is a fate upon which unasked we exercise our mysteries. Thy horoscope is already cast—stretch forth thy hand, my child. Let me observe whether the coincidence of chiromancy confirms the researches already made into thy fate."

The Princess extended her arm across the table, whilst her elbow leant carelessly on the shoulder of the negro page, and her eyes were fixed on the Prophet, who strengthening his sight with the aid of glasses took her hand in his.

"Tis a chaste cold palm this," he began: "was it thus on Midsummer's eve, when on the terrace at York Place, by the pale light of the early moon, three words were spoken to which two lips replied?"

Scarce had the Astrologer finished the sentence when her Lancasterian blood being roused, the Red Rose in one blush usurped all the territories of its paler rival, covering at once her snowy neck, and rising over her marble forehead even till lost among the luxuriant locks of her fair hair. Her first care seemed, lest any third person should have overheard, what, unexplained, conveyed so injurious an imputation, and she cast her eyes doubtfully, for a moment, even on her own negro page, till reassured by recollecting his infirmity in having been born deaf and dumb, and observing that he was now in the undivided exercise of one of the senses nature had left him, by staring immoveably at a stuffed alligator which hung at the other side of the room.

The Astrologer did not seem to wish her to dwell painfully on the impression he had excited, and his deportment even showed concern at the agitating effect his allusion had produced, as he continued, "The past and the presentalike are open to me; and for the future, the contradictory lines on this hand confirm the unusual conjunctions and oppositions which thy horoscope presented, and which mark thy fate with such sin-

gular inconsistencies as seldom fall to mortal lot. Some of the extraordinary contradictions of which are here described," and he read as from the volume:

"Strange crosses come, strange hopes between
A maiden mother, throneless queen,
A kneeling prince unmoved must see:
A lifeless lord, a loveless life,
A monarch's bride, but subject's wife,
Such thou must bear, such thou may'st be."

With these doggerel lines of, to her, inexplicable import, the Princess was obliged to be satisfied; and after splendidly remunerating the Astrologer, she left his dwelling, rather annoyed at what he appeared by some means or other to know of her past life, than enlightened by any insight he had furnished as to her future fate.

The marriage from which the Princess Mary, seeing no other means of avoidance, had in her despair trusted to the stars to find her out a chance of escape, was the one with Louis the XII. of France, which her brother Henry the VIII. had then almost concluded for her.

The negociation had been in progress ever since the time that the Duc de Longueville, who was the original instigator of the alliance to Louis, had been last in England. during the agitation caused by the first hint of the proposal to her, that the meeting to which painful allusion had been made by the Astrologer had occurred in the gardens of York Place, between the Princess and Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. This accomplished young nobleman had long entertained a romantic, though apparently hopeless, passion for the Princess Mary, which she had reciprocated in secret; and upon this occasion, the sudden dread of complete separation had revealed to both those mutual feelings, which otherwise maiden modesty on one side, and inferiority of rank on the other, might long have conspired to conceal. As the Astrologer hinted, yows of constancy were on that occasion hastily exchanged, and respectfully sealed by the lips of Suffolk. This was, in-

deed, to him the heaven of an hour, and as before his wishes had hardly ever risen to hopes, so at that moment he would not allow them to be depressed with a single doubt as to the future, buoyed up as they were with the proud consciousness he had derived from herself, that with all the enthusiastic admiration her beauty had excited, and all the brilliant prospects her exalted rank commanded, 'twas his love alone she valued. The intoxicating happiness of this idea was, however, shortlived. The next day, at the Council Board, he heard the king formally announce the French monarch's proposal and the Princess's prompt acceptance of it. Henry had in this instance, at his own pleasure, inferred that concurrence on her part, which he had not as yet obtained, but whose facility he meant to ensure, by refusing to admit any difficulties. though Suffolk at first disbelieved Henry's expression of his sister's ready and grateful assent, he waited in vain for any public or private contradiction of it.

The fact was, Henry had in the earlier stages of the intimacy between the Princess and Suffolk, encouraged it for his own momentary amusement, without any ulterior views; and with that recklessness of the feelings of others which he always showed, though as yet not matured into the deliberate cruelty of his later years, he would not have scrupled to extirpate the seeds of that attachment he had himself so wantonly sown, by the death of one, and the confinement of the other party. He was now entirely occupied with the thoughts. of the French connexion by means of his sister's marriage, and poor Mary had too much knowledge both of her brother's character, and his insight into the state of her feelings, not to dread, that any opposition on her part would have no other effect, than that of causing the instant execution of Suffolk as a presumptuous traitor, for having ever entertained those hopes, which in mere wantonness Henry had himself originally fostered.

It was her knowledge, therefore, that all her motions were watched, and her consequent fear for Suffolk's safety, which

at first prevented her from attempting any farther communication with him. This, Suffolk, impatient and disappointed, did not understand; and his manly pride took alarm at the unworthy manner in which he thought she had taken advantage of his rank to trifle with his feelings: therefore, though he still watched all her proceedings with the jealous interest of a lover, he ostensibly withdrew himself much from court, and thereby prevented those opportunities for explanation which accident might again have presented.

rom the visit to the Astrologer, from which Mary had vaguely expected comfort, she could extract no counsel. It appeared, as far as she could construe its obscure announcement, that her fate was to submit to her present lot, through whose gloom an indistinct glimmering of ultimate happiness was allowed to appear.

Meantime, the treaty of marriage was definitively concluded. The preparations for her departure proceeded, and to one, whose only hope was in indefinite delay, the arrangements even of chamberlains and purveyors seemed winged with uncourtly celerity of motion.

For many weeks, Suffolk had appeared studiously to avoid her, but the king (probably to show that he would not believe in the possibility of any sufficient objection to such an arrangement) had determined, that the Duke should accompany the Princess in her train to France.

It was on the first of October, that having just taken leave of her brother and his court, the young Princess standing on the beach at Dover, found herself, for the first time for many months, by the side of the Duke of Suffolk, whose duty, as her chamberlain, it was to superintend her embarkation, some delay in which, the rest of her train were busily employed in attempting to remove. She hesitated a moment, as if it required an effort to assume courage to address him, and then with, as much apparent calmless as she displayed when she first presented herself before the Astrologer, she thus began:

"My lord, there are many thoughts, which the sea must, in its next ebb and flow, as effectually obliterate as it will wash away the footmarks where we now stand. But one last word in England!—Trust me it is not without reason I should ask such a question. Did you ever to any one else mention——"Her voice here faltered, "mention Midsummer's eve?"——

"By the honour of a knight and gentleman, never!" said Suffolk, solemnly, and then continued in a more passioned tone. "No! though my wounds were once wantonly probed, I fear me, but in sport and derision by that dear hand, which but for a moment held forth a precious healing balm!—Maddening as has been the torture that conduct inflicted, never, never would I expose such injuries to a stranger's touch."

Mary was evidently much moved by the misery his manner betrayed. It would have been well for her present happiness, if she had not known him too well to believe him capable of playing the braggart at the expense of her fame, and she had always been disposed to attribute the Astrologer's accurate information as to the past to the exercise of that mysterious art which enabled him to anticipate the future. But distressed as she was at the imputation, which she could not deny that in some respect appearances justified, of having excited his hopes, but-to disappoint them, yet how could she now attempt any explanation without the risk of saying much more than in her present situation would be warranted either by prudence or propriety? The embarrassment this produced was interrupted by the announcement that all things were in readiness for her embarkation, and the future Queen of France was in silence handed by her chamberlain on board the vessel which was to bear her from her native land.

The cumbrous sails of the gorgeous but unwieldy machine were at length unfurled, when seated, in the gilded stern, and fixing her eyes on the slowly receding cliffs, the Princess resigned herself to reflections on her own hard fate.

"So long as these waters shall roll these rival lands be-

tween, so long shall man cross and recross them as glory bids or pleasures beckon-even of my own sex the happier and the humbler one shall find in their brief passage but the means to gratify the restless love of change; but so long shall royal maidens like me shudder at the hideous gulf, in whose depth hope is sunk—behind which is for ever left a happy home-beyond which is sought an unloved lord-a stranger husband.—That exalted birth which is the boast of man thus becomes the curse of woman. What have we to do with ambition? It is the distinguishing attribute of the other sex -it mingles in their sports of childhood, and lingers amidst the decay of age.—The insignia of power are with them at once the bauble of the boy and the pride of after-life.-The empire of the head we resign to man-the heart belongs to us.—Iron must that crown be which could gall a manly brow-but the heart wears no crowns.-Woman's life is love, and the world holds not so hopeless a slave as that royal maiden whose affections are fettered. Whilst we share the common feelings of our sex, what tinsel trappings, what hollow flattery, what irksome state, can compensate to us for the loss of those precious moments we must never know -the first desire to please—the soft suspicion of awakened interest, and the endless minute links in the chain of sympathy which the intercourse of equality rivets: instead of this, our person unseen, our inclinations unsought, with disputed provinces as a dower, and the adjustment of animosities as an attraction, are we, the veriest slaves in the world, consigned without remorse to alien arms."

When she at length averted her head from that spot, when the white cliffs of England were no longer distinguishable even as a faint speck on the horizon, her eyes, as she turned, encountered those of Suffolk, which were fixed upon her with a sad and stedfast gaze. "There," added she, "is the cruel aggravation of my peculiar lot. In what other rank of life could he be condemned as a duty to assist at the sacrifice of her he loves?"

The very intensity of this feeling recalled her to herself, reminded her of the necessity of attending to appearances, and restored to her that power of self-command, which is more early and not less severely taught by the etiquette of courts than by the philosophy of the schools.

Upon landing at Calais—on French ground, though English territory—she was received by the Duc de Vendôme, who was appointed to conduct her to Abbeville, at a few miles distance from which she was met by King Louis in a sort of incognito, the formalities of a state reception being considered too great an effort for his infirm state of health. And it was here that this amiable old man and his blooming bride first beheld each other.

As personal aversion formed no part of her objection to the match, and as his age and infirmities were of course well known, it does not appear that the Princess experienced any impression of disagreeable surprise at the interview.

When the king retired to allow her to continue her progress, the Duc de Longueville, at whose instigation the match had been originally proposed, elated at finding his own vivid descriptions of the beauty of the young Queen confirmed by the buzz of admiration of that courtly circle who then saw her for the first time, and gratified at the impression which seemed to have been made on the king, by the graceful ease with which she had received him, took the first opportunity of expressing a hope that "his majesty did not think his faithful servant had exaggerated the charms of the Island Princess."

"Would I had found that you had," said the good king;
it is not in cloth of gold we should shroud a corpse, and such is not the stuff of which to choose an old man's nurse. Had she more resembled the ill-matched partner of my early youth, the much-enduring Jane, she might, combined with regal state, have preferred a sick chamber to a cloister: but shall I, who in those wretched days felt all the misery in-

flicted, on the cruel plea of political commodity, by a forced and hateful union-shall I, who emancipated myself (if wrongfully, God forgive me!) from its thraldom—shall I, with this faded form upon the verge of the grave, and my affections already buried there, by the side of my beloved Anne-shall I subjugate to the passionless embrace of these withered arms a beautiful young creature, who with all the charms, must possess some of the feelings of her age? Must I tie down her youth to the confinement of a sick couch? or leave her innocence exposed to all the temptations of a libertine court -to the jealous enmity of Louise of Angoulème, or, worse still, the reckless admiration of her madcap son? Heaven knows that it is for my country's sake alone that I have been persuaded to this sacrifice! Hard is it, that it must be at the expense of every other social tie that I obtain the title of 'Father of my people.'"

The Duc de Longueville, as may be supposed, was not much pleased at this long and, as he thought, not particularly well-timed reply to his question. He could have suggested, that it was a great deal too late to enter into many of the considerations which the king had strung together; that any backwardness now would not only cause a quarrel between the countries, but must be considered as a personal insult by the princess herself; he could have enforced all this with much eloquence; but, upon the whole, he preferred leaving these arguments to suggest themselves, and, therefore, said nothing, but merely bowed as only courtiers bow: which forward bend of the body in a veteran of that cast is often made to contain as much meaning as, in the Critic, is attributed to the lateral motion of the head of a minister.

The next day the young princess was publicly received at the gates of Abbeville by the flower of the French court; at the head of which appeared Francis, the young Duc de Valois, the first prince of the blood, the gayest youth, the handsomest man, the most accomplished knight, and the most admired gentleman of his day. No one could have guessed, by the radiant expression of his careless countenance, which reflected happiness on all around, as he gaily led the splendid procession, which advanced to meet the future Queen of France, that he was heading an expedition which might for ever destroy his ambitious hopes by barring his succession to the throne: as little would any one have thought, who heard the tender expressions of passionate admiration with which, upon first beholding her, he expressed his sense of the surpassing beauty of the blushing princess, that he was then addressing the person towards whom he ought, most of all the world, to confine himself within the bounds of cold respect.

Mary was, as the accounts of the time tell us, dressed for the occasion "in a gorgeous habit wonderful to behold," and "mounted on a horse trapped in goldsmith's work very richly;" yet it required no such adventitious distinctions to tell the young, yet practised, eye of Francis, that she excelled not only the six-and-thirty surrounding ladies of her own train, amongst whom was the unfortunate Anne Boleyn, as yet almost a child, but even the choicest favourites of his own court, whom he had selected for their beauty, and who had not repelled him by their insensibility.

From this time forward, all those who could venture on such a subject to offer advice to a young prince, found it necessary to admonish him against indulging in a partiality whose moral sin was even exceeded by its political danger. Certainly the intentions of Francis towards the young queen would in these days be considered as in the highest degree libertine and unprincipled; but there were many extenuating circumstances—some peculiar to the times in which he lived—some to his own individual character and situation, which might rather explain, if not excuse them. In the first place, that change in the frame of society which admits women within the social bounds was then in its infancy; indeed, its origin has usually been attributed to Francis himself; but though no one encouraged and enjoyed it more than

he did, it had been in progress during the whole of the preceding reign, and naturally arose out of the gradual extinction of the feudal system, which led the nobility to prefer crowded courts to moated castles as their habitual residence. But that social freedom to which we now owe all the regulated enjoyments of domestic life, like political freedom, was at its origin subject to abuse; and the liberty of the sexes, like the liberty of states, was upon its first establishment liable to degenerate into license. Women, without any previous preparation, had suddenly become the companions of men; and the ignorant, though innocent, inmate of the secluded cloister, or the distant château, when at once transferred to the intoxicating influence of a splendid court, could neither imagine herself, nor learn from those who had preceded her, that she could be brought there for any other object than to endeavour to attract the admiration of him on whose smile all her new companions seemed to live-the young and handsome Duc de Valois.

All this had given Francis but an indifferent opinion of the invincibility of the sex. His mother, too, the Countess d'Angoulème, had first acted upon that degrading system, so often afterwards adopted by future queen mothers and regents of France, of governing her son through the medium of the charms of her maids of honour. He who was thus early taught to set at nought the protection of the maternal roof, and even invited to choose his mistresses out of the companions of his mother, was not likely to entertain a very exalted notion of the inviolability of any other title to respect. The proceedings of Louis XII., himself, with regard to his own divorce, had given a character of instability to the matrimonial connexions of monarchs, which there were not wanting other instances in that rank to confirm.

From this circumstance Francis might, perhaps, entertain the notion that in future his connexion with the English princess might, if it so pleased him, be rendered permanent and legal. Indeed his uncle's case seemed in many respects

so parallel, as to furnish a precedent for such an arrangement. The present king had been obliged, against his will, to marry the daughter of his then sovereign; and upon his accession to the throne had, upon the most frivolous pleas, after a twenty years marriage, with the greatest facility obtained a divorce from the see of Rome. The Duc de Valois had that very year been induced to marry the Princess Claude, whom he never loved; and this connexion, then so recent, had as yet failed to obtain for her that respect on his part which her gentleness and devotion to his interests afterwards secured, and which would then have prevented his entertaining even a vague and transient idea of inflicting upon her the insult and injury of a legal separation; though she never succeeded in inspiring him with that nice regard for her feelings which would have induced an attempt to conceal from her his manifold infidelities.

Louis had himself, upon his divorce, married the widow of his predecessor; Henry VIII. of England had united himself to his brother's bride: these instances seemed to encourage the idea that the throne and the marriage bed were transferable together; and the state of Louis's health justified the expectation, that ere long both would be vacant.

But, perhaps, after all, the real origin of Francis's present infatuation may be traced to that satiety produced by an endless succession of easy triumphs which made him long for some pursuit in which there should be difficulties to overcome; and with this view he certainly could not have chosen better than by rushing madly into one, where every consideration, both worldly and religious, combined as obstacles to forbid the attempt.

From the time of their first interview he had, as far as he could, taken every opportunity, both public and private, of expressing his admiration. For some days immediately following the public marriage at Abbeville, the court had been detained there by the illness of the king; and the journey, when undertaken, was so protracted by the same cause, as

to give the courtiers ground to speculate, whether he would live long enough for his bride to be crowned Queen of France in the cathedral of St. Denis.

This state of things naturally left Mary many solitary moments; and on one of the last nights of the journey, when they had halted at a chateau, beautifully situated in the vale of Montmorency, she had strolled out on the terrace to enjoy one of those delightful evenings by which, in its green old age of autumn, a northern climate sometimes atones for the coldness of its early spring. The vintage was at its height. The full October moon shone on many a merry group of peasants returning arm in arm from the labours of the day, who, with that light-hearted gaiety which has been in all ages the characteristic of their nation, danced along, singing, as they went, scraps of rustic love ballads. Whilst Mary's ears still dwelt on the lingering sound—as one of these died away in the distance, a clear, melodious voice near her took up the burthen of the song, and she beheld the Duc de Valois, who, lightly leaping over the low parapet, stood before her; the graces of his manly figure rather enhanced by the simplicity of his present dress, as contrasted with the more gorgeous attire in which he generally indulged, partly, perhaps, from mistaken vanity, partly in compliance with the tawdry taste of the age.

With a playful air he first addressed her:—"The barefooted vendangeurs sing in autumn; the feathered tribe, when free, in spring; but for us, poor royal birds, pent in separate cages, it is courtly winter all the year round, which forbids us to warble our wild love notes."

"Your pardon, my lord," replied Mary, with a simplicity half natural, half assumed; "you sang but now passing well, and no one prevented you."

Francis paused a moment, then approaching nearer, addressed her in a different tone—"Listen to me, Mary,—for queen I will not call thee, at least as yet,—perhaps even now thou wilt not understand; but hear me at last thou

must. From the first moment that thy image blessed these eyes I have been an altered man, and envy the sea-girt limits of thy native island, which have so long confined within their narrow sphere so bright a vision. art now in the land of liberty and love; and here we de not deny to royal blood that freedom of choice which links the hands of yonder peasants: nay, it is our peculiar privilege to mend the mistakes of fate in this regard. poor uncle's life hangs but upon a thread: thy widowhood will be complete before thy marriage; and then Claude shall be no more to me than Jane was to Louis, if Mary of England would but be to me what Anne of Brittany became to him. Of myself I will not vainly speak; but if thy ears did not reject the concurrent acclamations of every town through which we passed, then mayest thou believe that we were indeed for each other formed, and that through us the union of England and France should be, not like the hollow truce of these sickly nuptials, but sterling as thy merits.... lasting as my love."

As hesaid these last words, Francis seized her hand, pressed it to his lips, and encircling her waist with the other arm, seemed inclined, by the warmth of his manners, to attest the sinoarity with which he spoke. But abruptly disengaging herself, she answered in an angry tone, "If I so long have listened, it is surprise alone that has held me dumb. For myself, Ispeak not first; but for my lord and master, thy sovereign, kinsman, benefactor, more than father: is it thus his long life of kindness should be repaid by the dishonour of his wife----the disgrace and misery of his child?"

This appeal was just of that character calculated to have most weight with one like Francis, naturally generous and grateful. The dishonour of the wife was an argument which his advection did not qualify him fully to appreciate; but the diagrace and misery of the daughter of his best friend, who had bred him up as his successor, on the faith, if not on the condition, of his union with her, was an image which thus

forcibly presented to him from such a quarter, caused him to pause. Mary took advantage of this to add-

"For myself, I will only condescend to say, that if I had been happily blessed with the exercise of that free choice of which you speak, Francis de Valois would never have been mine."

This was uttered in that clear, calm tone, which would not allow Francis to sooth his vanity by inferring coquetry in disguise. For a moment he stood in silent astonishment; when endeavouring to recollect anything he had ever seen or heard of the same kind, the utter impossibility that such a sentence could really be meant, struck him so forcibly, that, throwing himself on his knees before her, he exclaimed,

"Nay, then, this is needless cruelty! Revoke but that sentence, and then I leave thee."

Whilst he thus spoke, the mild light of the moon hardly softened enough to suit the mock humility of his attitude, a countenance which the recollection of a thousand triumphs then animated with the glowing consciousness of invincibility.

"Rise, my lord, Icommand," cried Mary loudly, "or the king must be troubled with the chastisement of this insolence!"

Whether it might be the sound of her voice or merely accident which brought him, but as she said this, the Duke of Suffolk stood before them.

"For shame, my lord!" exclaimed Suffolk, fiercely; "if you thus forget the respect due to the king—to his majesty—to yourself, be not surprised if I forget that which I then no longer owe you."

"Tis well, sir," said Francis, coolly rising. "A child of France was but upon his knees to the mother of her people. A child of France knows his duty now without requiring an English dry-nurse gossip to teach it him: those days, thank Heaven and St. Denis! are past." Then turning to the queen, he added, in a lower tone, "So, madam, I find I must understand that unwelcome sentence as a confidence you are already provided? you would not trust the land of your

adoption for those distractions which should dispel the dulness of a sick chamber. 'Tis well. Keep my secret: fear not I should divulge yours."

Then turning away before she well knew how to reply, which indeed, in the presence of Suffolk, would not have been easy, he said to the latter, "For you, my lord, the tourney is near; and if you would cram a child of France with any more of your moral medicines, you must adopt the spear as a forcing spoon."

As he left the terrace, many attendants, both French and English, joined the queen, so she had no opportunity, even had she thought it right, of holding any communication with Suffolk on the scene which had just passed; yet she could not help remarking, that though Suffolk avoided every occasion of ostentatious display, and even shunned her society in private, that this was not the first occasion on which he had appeared to maintain a constant and watchful, though unobtrusive, superintendence over all her motions. As in the retirement of her chamber she revolved the recent scene, and the strange conduct of Francis, "He called me 'mother of my people,' "she thought: "so far then the juggle works:

'A maiden mother, throncless queen,
A kneeling prince unmoved must see.'"

Gorgeous was the pageant with which, after the ceremony of the coronation at St. Denis, the young queen was received into the capital.

From the highest to the lowest, through all the crowded streets, there was not one individual who did not make her fortunate arrival among them a matter of personal gratulation, and a source of peculiar happiness to himself. The knights and nobles vied with each other in the splendour of the appointments, with which they surrounded her person and swelled her train. The craftsmen and citizens exerted their rival ingenuity in the quaintness of the devices with

which they adorned the houses by which she passed; even the poorest and most destitute, who had nothing else to offer, showered down blessings on her beauteous head, as with a gracious smile she acknowledged their greetings.

She was, as the chroniclers tell us, splendidly attired; "on her head a coronall all of great perles," which became the delicacy of her complexion; "her necke and brest full of juels," seated in a chariot covered about in white cloth of gold, and the horses which drew it in furniture of cloth of gold. First in attendance upon her came Francis, Due de Valois, magnificently dressed in a vest of cloth of gold and silver, and a mantle of crimson velvet hung crossways, and richly set with pearls and precious stones. He was mounted on a fiery charger, a position in which he always appeared to peculiar advantage, as no one in his day excelled so much in the noble art of horsemanship, of which he was so well aware, that upon occasions like the present, he did not scorn to provoke opportunities for the wanton display of his skill by the exercise of those little artifices, in more modern days exposed, by hinting that

"The left heel insidiously aside
Provokes the caper, which it seems to chide."

Francis is elsewhere described by the English chronicler Hall, whose partiality will not be suspected, as "a goodlye prince, statelye of countenance, merry of chere;" and it is impossible in any other words better to describe that sort of appearance and deportment most calculated to excite the enthusiasm of a surrounding multitude, who are always readily captivated by the easy condescension of conscious superiority. As radiant in smiles he bent on either side his acknowledgments of the clamorous welcome with which he was hailed, his ear again caught his own name coupled with that of the Queen in the universal expression of conjoint admiration.

Of all the many thousand gossips who that day with justice pronounced them the handsomest pair they had ever

seen, how few there were who doubted a moment, that the objects of their admiration must both be as happy, as they felt equally sure they deserved to be, judging superficially alike of their characters, and of their fortunes; believing virtue to consist in smiles, and happiness in state. And yet, of even those whose abject poverty enabled them only to contribute a barren blessing on the pageant as it passed, there was hardly one, whose feelings did not allow them to derive more real pleasure from it, than those two individuals who formed its most distinguished part.

Mary saw in it the cold-blooded consummation of the sacrifice of her best affections, joined to some other indistinct fears as to the increasing difficulties of her situation to which she had become alive since her last interview with the Dauphin. Francis himself, his feelings towards Mary nettled by mortified vanity and rejected love, though by nature little apt to dwell upon selfish considerations of remote injury to his interest, could not entirely forget that this pageant might be with him but the prologue to the loss of the crown of France.

Various and singularly contradictory were the emblematical paintings with which the citizens of Paris had hung their walls, attempting thereby to personify those whom they wished to celebrate. The good king himself, whom illness prevented from forming in his own person part of the procession, figured there sometimes as Solomon, sometimes as Bacchus. The confusion of countries and of creeds, of saints with satyrs, being utterly disregarded.

Mary was at the same time personified both by Ceres and Queen Sheba.

One might be as accurate a representation as the other; though her slight figure and almost infantine graces were not exactly calculated to fill the more ample proportions with which both the goddess and the Queen are usually commemorated. As for poor Louis, it was hard to say, whether his extenuated form was least calculated to realize one's idea

of the jolly god Bacchus; or his decaying energies of every kind, least likely to fulfil one's notion of that mighty monauch, whose power is recorded by his having "seven hundred wives princesses, and three hundred concubines."

One of the personifications of Mary was in compliment to her insular birth, that of Venus rising out of the sea; but as it would have been almost treasonable to imagine their Queen in the goddess' usual undress, besides the customary shell behind, she held before her a cloth of gold tissue petticoat, whose stiffness showed it had defied the power of the element from which she had just emerged. At each of these shows were written many copies of laudatory verses; at the side of each of which stood a most useful personage, Monsieur l'Expositeur, or a gentleman expounder; an individual, whose office is now unfortunately abolished, on what plea I am at a loss to conceive, as no one could call that a sinecure, which imposed the task of explaining, and of rendering intelligible, the equally figurative descriptions of later laureates.

On the morrow of the Queen's entry in Paris was the tournament which had been anticipated with impatience, as an occasion of amical rivalry, by the assembled chivalry of France and England with other strangers from various parts of Europe who had been collected by its fame.

And here I could have indulged the reader, curious in such matters, with an elaborate description, copied from the chronicles, of the various preparations, equipments, and appointments. I could ring the changes on "cloth of gold and silver paled;" "tawney velvet and cloth of silver cloudy;" "white velvet and green myrtel with satyn, and pouned with gold." All this and much more could I do, were I not warned that I am not at my own leisure, conducting my reader a jog-trot pace through a three-volumed journey, but only engaged to forward him one stage post in his trip through the Keepsake, and I must take care, lest he should find this relay a long or a tedious one.

I must, however, delay him one moment to remark, that no one had looked forward more eagerly to the prospect of this display than the Dauphin Francis. It was an exercise in which he was supposed to be unrivalled. It was peculiarly calculated to elicit those spontaneous bursts of admiration to whose charms he was always susceptible. He also, probably, did not object to it at this moment, as the most princely opportunity of humbling Suffolk. But as "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong," it so happened, that at the first "random" or chance mélée, he received an accidental hurt in the hand, which prevented him from holding his lance or performing his challenge at the barriers. After which, he had the mortification to see none of any nation so distinguished, as Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.

Francis the while stood disabled by the side of the queen, who, at the king's desire, that she might be the better seen by the admiring crowd, kept her place likewise standing, whilst the poor invalid himself was, from weakness, extended at length on a couch which was placed for him on the royal stage.

When Suffolk first presented himself there to receive the meed of his valour at the hands of her whose praise he most prized, the dauphin, touching him with his disabled arm, said in an under tone, "Foiled in my first revenge, I bide my time;" to which Suffolk bent low his head, as if overpowered with a princely compliment, and retired.

The most severe trial to which the courage and activity of Suffolk was exposed, was an encounter with an unknown cavalier, in the arrangement of which, the jealousy of our national authorities of that day do not hesitate to attribute some unfair play on the part of the dauphin, in having put a man of prodigious strength there in the place of another, on purpose " to have the duke rebuked," who himself is said to have imagined, that he was "a person set on for the nonce." Certain it is, that his name was never known,

his vizor was never raised, and he was of gigantic stature and of wonderful power. During the centest, Francis stood close to the Queen on one side, though rather behind her; and whilst he seemed to be exclusively occupied in looking down on the struggle with that calm but rather supercitious approbation, with which a superior player regards the successful game of an inferior, yet ever and anon, with the esrner of an eye, he would observe the deportment of Mary; and he who was well versed in the slightest symptoms, by which woman's feelings can be detected, knew full well how to interpret the ever-changing colour, the quivering lip, and the irregular respiration with which she marked the chances of the doubtful fight.

But when victory at length declared for Suffolk, and the battered body of the still unknown cavalier was borne from the lists, no one was louder, or apparently more sincere in his commendation of the conqueror, than the Dauphin, Francis.

In the pause which ensued after this, while the victorious Suffolk had become, for the moment, the object of general admiration, the court fool, who probably thought that he had been neglected amid the pageantry of the day, and who, always a privileged person, did not care by what means he regained public attention, mounted an elevated sert of bex built for the judges, and pointing to the sofa on which the king was then stretched, apparently much exhausted with the length of time the sports had lasted, loudly exclaimed, "There lies the good King Louis, the father of his people! and—" but here he was interrupted by shouts of applause which resounded on all sides, and seemed to come from the inmost hearts of the spectators. He repeated a second time, " The father of his people-" increased applause. A third time he proclaimed, with a mock intonation of profound respect," The father of his people, and the grandfather of his wife!" A huzz arose—a titter fellowed, and was succeeded hy shouts of delight very

different in sound from the last; which served to show how apt was thought the fool's allusion.

"Do you hear them, Longueville?" murmured the poor king, grasping the arm of his adviser: "and it was for such fickle, thoughtless creatures as these, and for what I feelishly considered their interests, that I was tempted to sacrifice my ewn wishes, and, perhaps, to blight her fendest hopes?"

There was an attempt to renew the sports, but a shock had been given to Leals's spirits which prevented his ability any longer to struggle with his increasing infirmatics of body, and he retired abruptly, already sickening with that last attack, which, two menths only after these inauspicious nuptials, terminated his amiable life on the 1st of January, 1515.

It could not be expected, under the circumstances of their marriage, that this event would be felt by Mary as a personal loss to herself, however she might regret it as that of a good man removed from that world where his virtues had been exerted with such benefit to those around him. But there were many grounds for uneasiness as to the future, in the change which this had wrought in her own situation. Should she even return to England, she could only expect that her brother would meditate a more lasting sacrifice of her person, as the purchase of some political object of his own.

But at present, she was to a certain extent in the power of her husband's successor, in whom circumstances had not induced her to place much confidence. She had also recently been farther alarmed by receiving a message from the new king, desiring a private interview with her; and upon her declining it, he was represented to have said, that "she would repent it, and that she knew not her own interests."

Harassed with fears of every kind, during the first period of her widowhood, when seclusion and solitude gave additional weight to their influence, as soon as the decent observances of the first duties of mourning were fulfilled, she determined upon a step which, considering its immediate danger and the many permanent satisfices it involved, may

be cited as one of the strongest instances of the power of love.

"Yes," thought she, "it must be so: it is not one of the least of the penalties of my rank, that the retiring delicacy of our sex, which teaches that we should not unsought be won, must yield to the higher consideration of not endangering his safety whilst I endeavour to secure our mutual happiness. Should punishment await the attempt, the act must appear to have been wholly my own; and even Henry may hesitate to shed the blood of a sister."

She therefore contrived to have a letter conveyed to Suffolk, frankly offering him her hand, and proposing that a private marriage should take place within four days, or that he should at once and for ever decline it.

It may be supposed with what rapture a lover received such a proposal, rendered the more acceptable by its very precipitation; and in Suffolk's case, the sudden exaltation of his feelings was in proportion to the depths of his recent despondency.

Great difficulty at first presented itself in finding a priest to whom she could confide the execution of her project. Her own chaplain, a proud courtly churchman, and a devoted cultivator of the ripening fortunes of Wolsey, who then "bore his blushing honours thick upon him," was the last person whom she could trust. The French clergy were not likely to undertake an office which, when known, would probably be so displeasing to their new sovereign. In a Dominican convent, in the heart of Paris, was an Italian friar, who had attracted much attention by his popular eloquence, and the zeal with which he had opposed the new doctrines then just beginning to be broached; and as he owed no temporal allegiance to the sovereigns, either of France or of England, Mary selected him for the performance of the ceremony; to which, by the promise of reward, he was readily persuaded; and it was arranged that it should take place in the chapel of his convent two hours after dark.



True to her appointment, and attended only by her black page, Mary escaped from the palace by a garden gate, and was there met by the happy Suffolk.

It was a cold bleak evening in the dead of winter: the north wind whistled loudly through the narrow streets, and heavy flakes of snow, just then beginning to fall, were whirled around, as this fair descendant of a long line of kings, the favoured sister of a mighty potentate, one, too, whose alliance was at that moment eagerly sought as an object of competition by every unmarried monarch in Europe, gave this most convincing proof of the triumphant power of love: exposing her delicate person to the rude inclemencies of the storm; and wandering in darkness and by stealth through that capital where she had so lately been borne in triumph, steadfastly resolved to unite her fate with the object of her early and constant attachment.

The difficulties of the way being overcome, the lovers were ranged on each side of the altar, at the other extremity of the Dominican chapel; one lamp alone, held by the black page, dimly served to show the surrounding gloom. The service was already begun. The deep tones of the monk's voice echoed through the empty aisles, and all else was silence around, when suddenly the clatter of hoofs was heard in the distance, and the clanking arms of cavalry in motion might next be distinguished. The sound of the monk's voice, which had at first mingled at its loudest pitch with these discordant noises, gradually sank lower and lower as they approached; and though a sense of the sanctity of his holy office so far struggled with his fears as to prevent his entirely pausing in his duty, yet by degrees his articulation became almost inaudible.

The cavalry seemed to have drawn up on one side of the outward walls of the chapel, and the light of a hundred torches glared through the windows, and threw a reflected light even upon the group at the altar, showing the effects of the interruption on the countenances of those who composed it.

No colouring could any longer be traced in the pallid features of the monk, which might not also be found in the mingled black and white divisions of his monastic robe. The face of Suffolk denoted a contest between impatience and resolution. Mary's expression was at first that of tender anxiety for the fate of one whom she had involved in ruin; but as she east her eyes upwards, as if imploring strength to bear the result, it assumed the character of mild resignation.

If they had previously entertained any hopes that they might be deceived, as to the nature and destination of the cavalcade, these were ended when, upon its halting, many irregular and discordant voices shouted "Vive le roi;" which cries arose from a mob that had joined the escort in its progress, either attracted as other insects are only by the lights, or collected by that instinctive interest which all Frenchmen were inclined to take in the movements of their monarch, even at such an unusual hour, and in such inclement weather. Succeeding these shouts, a well known voice was heard to exclaim at the door of the chapel, "En arrière, my friends, will you not allow your king to go even to the confessional alone?" Then addressing the officer of the Scotish guards, the same voice continued, "Please to make these officious followers withdraw a little; I want no witnesses in my present business."

The door opened, and one figure alone was seen advancing through the darkness of that part of the chapel. At sight of this, the priest, who had still gone mumbling on, though without much consciousness as to what part of the service he had reached, came to a sudden stop; and Francis addressing the others—

"Did I not say my time would come? and though ye thought by this unseemly hour to slip me, yet a new king knows and hears everything. So, madam, you could not wait, as in duty bound, to learn the opinion of the sovereign of your adopted land, and the kingly brother of your royal blood? Here you may read both. Light to your mistress, you young imp of mischief!" to the page, as he handed Mary the two papers, which her agitation prevented her at first from understanding. At length she exclaimed, "Is it possible!" when she found, to her extreme surprise, that the first was a friendly letter from Francis to her brother, urging him strongly to consent to her union with Suffolk. That the answer contained Henry's assent, probably obtained by his desire to secure the friendship of a young king, whose disposition he then thought, and always asserted, was so congenial to his own: at the same time feeling indifferent in what manner the person of his sister contributed to that end.

"Is this possible, sir?" said Mary.

"Possible!" replied Francis, "anything is possible to one whose first study is the happiness of your sex; when not fortunate enough to succeed in that object himself, he is but too glad to find one who can," pointing to Suffolk.

"What can I say, sire?" said Suffolk.

"Say not a word till the priest has finished his say. I came to dispel doubts, not to create difficulties; and know well enough that in such a case a marriage, even at the risk of your heads to-night, is better than one in perfect safety, if purchased by delay, even till to-morrow."

The monk had collected enough of what had just past, to begin again in the full, sonorous tone in which he had originally started; and when he had concluded, whilst the king beckoned him one moment aside, as it appeared, to remove any remains of fear by a handsome reward, Mary said to Suffolk, "And it is all fulfilled, then; 'a monarch's bride, but subject's wife.' I told you the predictions of the prophet of St. Paul's: do you not marvel at their fulfilment?"

- " Less I than any man, sweetest Mary!" answered Suffolk.
- "Why so?" inquired she.
- "How shall I dare to tell you why? That I had found gold was the prophet's idol, for which he would sell shares

of his own present lot, as well as scraps of the future fate of others; and that 'twas I who appeared to you in his disguise."

"And yet presumed to mention Midsummer's-eve?" said Mary, then too happy to be very angry.

"Nay, as yet I cannot forgive myself any part of the base deceit, much less know how best to plead for your pardon; but only recollect the utter desolation of my feelings at that sad time. Left by your total silence to struggle in vain against that conviction of your fickle falsehood, which events seemed to place beyond a doubt-think, too, of the temptation such an opportunity offered to find out if I had indeed been from the first deceived; but when your agitation showed me the full success of my cruel stratagem, I hated myself for the shameful triumph thus obtained, and had almost at that moment thrown off my odious disguise, and casting myself at your feet, implored that pardon which I felt I did not deserve. But as you did not seem to anticipate any chance of escape from the French alliance, it was of the utmost importance to me that your past promises should be impressed on your recollection, coupled with hopes of that future which I would not believe to be impossible. For the rest of my cautionary predictions I am indebted only to the lynx eye of love, and some little knowledge of his majesty's character," he added, bowing to the king, who had again joined them.

"And yet," said Francis, "thou may'st thank thy own stars that thou wert not even now a lying prophet. Thou would'st hardly have foretold my presence here, or—had I come—that it would have been for such a purpose."

"Your grace's goodness far exceeds my utmost expectations. Let us hope that you will so far extend it as to pardon——"

"Say no more, my lord," interrupted the king; "there is no one more inclined than myself not to think too harshly of any errors into which this lady's surpassing beauty may have misled poor weak man:" whilst with a look full of meaning he took the bride's hand, and raised it respectfully to his lips; then added, "Now to the wedding feast!"

The Duke and Duchess of Suffolk started soon afterwards on their return to their native land—were publicly married at Calais; and with very different feelings did Mary again cross the Dover channel, now no longer "a monarch's bride, but subject's wife."

CURATE-CONFESSOR OF VIROFLAY.

A REAL GHOST STORY.

BY COLLEY GRATTAN.

VIROPLAY is a pretty little village, a couple of miles from Versailles, on the Paris side, within view from the main road, and snugly screened from the east winds by the noble wood of Sartory. It forms one of the succession of pleasant objects between the capital and the truly regal creation of Louis XIV. It has become the fashion to say, and, for aught I know, to think, that this monarch did nothing for France; but with Versailles and its environs before my eyes, I dissent flatly from the assertion.

I hold that magnificence in a king, like charity in a private person, covers a multitude of sins.

Reflecting on the evils which this despot entailed on his country, I see that they brought their remedies with them: and marking the living traces of his pride, I feel that they have stamped on the national mind the impress of the splendour which characterized his own.

There are several methods of going from Paris to Versailles. Men who are the least enslaved by prejudice, indolence, or the gout, take their stiks and walk: others ride. The spoiled children of fortune drive in their own carriages. Those less lucky, who like regularity and kill time by a stop-watch, go in gondoles. I, who hate to clip his wings, or pull him by the forelock, and who give him ample leisure to whet his

sithe and ogle his victims through the empty end of his glass, prefer the gondolets. It may be well to mention that gondolet, as here used, does not mean a water-going vehicle, but is adopted as the diminutive of gondole—the appellation of those long-bodied, lubberly conveyances, dragged, so apparently against their will, by four horses—and I choose the epithet, as more delicate and dignified than any of the villanous cognomina applied to the humble family of two-wheeled carriages which I so punctually patronize.

This degraded and ill-treated tribe of vehicles was once a flourishing and consequential body corporate. Patient suffering was not then its badge, nor obloquy its only notice. I do not know how it was, but I used to fancy that the rawboned horses (for they were always of the same breed) held up their blind and crazy heads, stiffened their skeleton necks, and pawed forth their bowed and tottering fore legs, with somewhat of an aristocratical and feudal air. The drivers, too, in those beaux jours, cracked their whips with a more independent twist, and pried not, as they are now wont, into every house along the road; nor hallooed forth "Paris! Paris! Versailles!" to every foot passenger, with their present cringing tone.

I look on these poor drivers as I regard a negro, a gipsy, a Jew clothesman, or any other unfortunate being suffering under the ban of proscription. I therefore always give them a helping hand along their comfortless career, and feel much more at my ease when looking up at the ponderous gondole, as its flashy yellow panels flaunt past us on the road. But these gondolets, so much the butt of contempt, have nevertheless many advantages over their gaudy competitors. In the summer season they are much cooler, and at all times to a man of lively fancy much easier. You have not much rumbling of wheels, and no rattling of windows; no suffocation from bad smells—for the air, like my advice, perhaps, "comes in at one ear and goes out at the other." You run no risk of an unpleasant countenance before you, nor of re-

ceiving a whiff of garlic into yours, for every one sits front foremost—in contrast to the corps of Irish yeomanry, whose captain, on a retreat, always ordered it to "advance backwards!" So if your front-rank neighbours fall asleep and tumble forward, you are not the pillow they recline on. You halt when you like, to stretch your legs; you are not hurried at starting or stopping; and you arrive, after all, and within an hour, more or less, of the unwieldy monsters I am writing (since I cannot run them) down.

Then, let me ask, does it go for nothing to have the facetiæ of the driver cheering your way? Is it nought to have the brave and intelligent soldiers of the guard, flowing over with thrilling anecdotes of flood and field, who go out to spend their Sundays at Versailles? Is it nothing to have the neat, chattering washerwomen—or perhaps the washerwomen's pretty daughters—coming with their linen to Paris on the Monday morning? Nothing to hear all these, and others of their class, reading you lessons of courtesy and gallantry at every step; to hear of sensibilité, and sentiment, and morale, and physique, and amitié, and amour—and a hundred other delicate distinctions, from the mouths of artisans and "operatives," who in England breathe nothing but gin and tobacco?

Had I never gone in a gondolet, I never should have gained all the good things to be picked up in such a way of travelling—never should have learned the adventures of the amazon of the quartier St.-Louis, who has seventeen wounds on her corpus, and enjoys the pension of a sous-officier—and never should have heard the ghost story of le bon curé de Viroflay, nor seen his cross of the legion of honour, which he won as a soldier, and wears as a priest.

But before I repeat that story, and while he may be supposed reciting it to me as we jogged along in our gondolet, let me, gentle reader, give a hint or two for the passenger who goes thus from Paris to Versailles. Let him, then, above all things remember not to forget to give a sou at starting, to the infirm, enfeebled wretch, male, female, or epicene, who

places a stool for his foot as he steps into the gondolet. him laugh heartily, and be pleased at, and give a sou to, those antic, soot-covered, one coloured harlequins, who tumble and caper at the side of the carriage, and pipe their monotonous, cuckoo-noted salutation, and tell you grinningly, "Je vous aimerai bien"-those little, barefooted, despised, and dirty Savoyards, who come down, poor things! in droves from their mountains, to sweep chimneys and clean shoes; and for whose misfortune there is lack of soot and mud in the summer season. Let him give a son to the fine bald-pated octogenary at Sevres, whose head was two or three times anticipated by Rembrandt's imaginings, who tells you of his age, his poverty, his deux bras cassés, and his inability to earn his pauvre pain. Let him give five sous over and above his bargain to the poor driver. Let him-but I need not go on with those appeals to the charities of men. There are objects enough on the road to give the hint more forcibly than I can.

I must, however, caution the traveller to read, by all means, the parallel lessons each side of him on his journey; to moradize, just on quitting the Place Louis Quinze, on the bathing boys swimming down the river to the left, opposed to the full grown children floating on the tide of fashion in the Champs Elysées to the right. Then there is the gilded dome of the Invalids, directly fronting the Pompe à feu-glory on one hand, and smoke on the other. Passing on, there is the new bridge of St. Cloud, as useful and unpicturesque as art could make it; and the mouldering remains of the old one at Sevres, as romantic and rotting as any natural beauty. The palace of the king rises royally above the woods to the north; and on the south is the cottage hiding itself in verdure, where lived one of our best poets, and after him an unworthy aspirant for the mantle, which (luckily for the world) he has not yet cast away-the very resting-place where genius would love to nestle.

And now—arrived at Viroflay—now for the story of its worthy curate!

"Yes, yes, my good sir," continued the curé, the previous part of our conversation having led to, but not bearing directly on my present subject, "yes, the man who goes through life in the mere routine of its pleasures, or even its crimes, knows little of the true nature of pleasure or the real effect of crime. It is he who cuts short his dissipation in its full career, and retires from the world with all the capability of enjoyment, that sees in the mellow light of reflection the true nature of what he has enjoyed. I have done that; and am now, at fifty, after ten years of reclusion, happy in the memory of delights that will never fade. The darker portion of my problem must be proved, thank Heaven, from other experience than mine. But no one, I firmly believe, can know the terrible consequences of guilt but he who seeks refuge from remorse in solitude. Common contrition, or punishment even, fails to let him into the depths of the suffering he has provoked. a good man, who has enjoyed life, would wish to enjoy it still, or a bad one would repent his wicked ways, it is there they must retire, to learn enjoyment and do penance."

"That is to say," replied I, "that there imagination has ample play, and brings back all the scenes of life with tenfold exaggeration—you must have known its power fully, my good father, from the extremes through which you appear to have passed."

"Known the power of imagination!" rejoined the curé, with a peculiar emphasis, a look as if his mind wandered to other worlds, and a gesture of nervous agitation—"of imagination! and pray, sir, what is that? Will you be good enough to define for me the direct line between fact and fancy?"

"Reverend sir," said I, somewhat astonished and piqued at his half serious, half ironical tone, "whoever has learned the first principles of drawing knows that the most difficult of all things is to trace a straight line."

: "True, sir, true—excuse my petulance—you touched inadvertently a tender chord—I did not calculate how far back or how deep my idle observations would have thrown my thoughts. Be satisfied, however, that I have felt the full force of solitude, in reference to guilt as well as folly."

"The latter, as respects your own early life? The former, as relates to—whom?" asked I, with a rather unjustifiable keenness of inquiry. But there was something in the curé's manner and look that spurred my curiosity beyond the bounds of that arrogant servility which is commonly called good breeding.

"Sir," said he, in an impressive and somewhat severe tone, "you may be aware that my duty often leads me into scenes where every human passion is laid bare to me; but at the same time the sufferer—the sinner, let me say—is covered with a sacred veil. Neither the name of the penitent nor the nature of the crime may be breathed from the confessors' lips."

This rebuke silenced me; but I was by no means sulky; and some little attentions to the good curé as we jogged alongbrought him into his former sociable tone and led to a renewal of our chat. But that epithet is really too familiar and trifling to express the nature of our conversation, which insensibly caught a most serious tinge, and became deeper and deeper at almost every phrase. I thought there was something on the curé's mind connected with recollections that my former random observations had aroused. I made no attempt to check the troubled current of his thoughts. There is a sacredness in the anxiety of a good man which no wise one dares to disturb. And those who best know the wisdom of playing the fool on fit occasions—the practical paraphrasts of the dulce est decipere-have the readiest tact at seeing when the cap should be doffed and the bells silent. For my part, I should, in the present case, have assumed a gravity even if I felt it not; but I was thoroughly and deeply impressed with it as the good curé discoursed.

I scarcely remember by what subtle link our talk was led

to supernatural subjects. My old remark about the force of imagination was certainly at the end of the chain, along which our ideas ran with electrical speed. We were soon, however, deep in the topic which possesses of all others the profoundest interest—for the enthusiast as a point of his creed, for the sceptic as a mark of scorn. But believer and infidel alike feel a shudder as they pass through a grave-yard at night; and whose are the nerves that do not thrill at the solemn narration of a ghost story?

"You are going on to Versailles?" asked the curé, with a determined tone of interrogation, as the gondolet suddenly stopped at a narrow road, leading from the main chaussée to the left, and almost covered with the graceful branches of acacias and lime trees which perfumed the air all'round us.

"Yes, are not you?" rejoined I, much disappointed at this apparent approach of a separation from my companion.

"No," said he, "this way lies my path; and it was then only I discovered that I had been journeying and talking with le bon curé de Viroflay, of whom I had beard so often and so favourably. A few words of invitation to walk with him to his village hard by, and thence through the wood of Sartory to Versailles, were answered by my springing out of the gondolet; and in a minute more we were en route together, under the perfumed canopy that hung across the byway already mentioned.

"You see that roofless skeleton of a cottage yonder, on the skirts of the wood?" said the curé, pointing to the object he described. "Well! that wretched hovel once formed for me, and not long since, a place of illustration to much of what we have been talking about. It was for some years the refuge of terrible guilt, and the scene of more terrible expintion—ay, and of more than our conversation has embraced. The wretched criminal who lived and died there was one of those men whom the furnace heat of our revolution reddened into fiends, whose blood turned to flame, and who sought to cool their burning hands by plunging them into streams of

gore. He was steeped in cruelty and crime. But of all his deeds, one of still deeper horror than the rest preyed on and haunted him with fearful force. By day or night, sleeping or waking, he had no respite from the memory of this actwould I could say that repentance was joined with remorse! But he repented not. A morbid sense of sin, a frightful state of present suffering, and a fierce dread of future punishment, were the sum of his feelings. He shunned mankind. whole intercourse with the world was limited to the sustenance of life. He employed a poor beggar-woman to seek his scanty food; but he would not, or could not, perhaps, bear to see another human face. Neither had he cat or dog, or any domestic animal, to solace him with a look of dependent sympathy. He lived in the wood, flying even at the sight of the foresters; and the sudden sound of the axe, as it struck against a falling tree, has been often followed by a shrick of despair from the poor sinner that made the rough woodman shudder. Yet no one then knew the secret of his emotion or the cause of his misanthropy—they were never known but to one, and that one is myself.

"But at the time I speak of, he used to shun me with peculiar care. Twice or thrice has he started from the wood into the path along which I was walking, and at sight of my priest's dress, with a look, a shudder, and a shriek of mixed horror and hatred, he would spring into the covert and fty. As I heard him rushing through the branches of the underwood, I used to cross myself and send a blessing after him; and offer up a prayer, which I hope found its way to Heaven.

"At length came an end to this awful tragedy of life. One night, about a year ago, a deep, solemn, summer's night, moonless and starless, oppressive and thick, I was lying in bed in my own cottage in the village there, unable to sleep from heat, reading by the light of my lamp, and inhaling the perfume of the roses that hung clustering round my open window, when I heard suddenly, and close by the casement, that well-known shriek which no voice but his could utter. I

sprang from my bed, hurried on my clothes, and went out into the garden—an irresistible influence seemed forcing me along. I caught the sound once more—distant and fainter, and in the direction of the hovel. I followed it instinctively; and as I came close to the dreary abode, I was shocked by the report of a pistol from within. My blood curdled. I was sure the frantic wretch had destroyed himself—I was right. I entered the open door, and found him lying on the earthen floor bathed in his own blood. The old woman was stooping over him, striving to staunch the wound with her rags. The courageous and clear-sighted humanity of her sex told her to do so. A man would have ran for assistance, and left the sufferer to bleed to death. But all the aid of art could not have saved the miserable suicide. The wound was mortal.

"We placed him on his pallet. He was sensible—he listened to my voice—he heard my words—the first sounds of consolation that had broken on him for years. I had touched his heart, and I saw tears gush from his eyes—the first he had ever shed. I sat hy his side alone, for I despatched the old woman for the village surgeon; and the sinner had time and strength to mutter his full confession. He died of exhaustion, for the stream of life would not yield to my efforts to stanch it. When the woman and the doctor arrived, they found me beside the ghastly corpse. I performed my last duties, and left the hovel. Never had I suffered so much. Death and blood had long been familiar to me. Death-bed confessions were of almost daily occurrence. But I had never before seen a self-murderer die—never had heard such a tale of horror as that!

"I reached my cottage, and found the door open as I had left it. I entered. The lamp was still burning by my bed-side. I flung myself down, and reciting some passages of my breviary. I strove to compose myself to sleep. But I was long in a fever of agitation. At times I fancied I heard the shriek, and I sprang up in the bed. Again, I thought I heard a rustling in the rose-trees, and could almost believe I distin-

guished the sounds of feet flying as did those of the suicide; when he was driven frantic from the cottage window on discovering me reposing so calmly on my bed. For he had come with the intention of seeking me, and pouring his secret into my bosom: but despair seized on him at sight of my tranquil confidence; and his next impulse was to place the fatal pistol to his breast.

"By degrees I grew drowsy-the book dropped from my hand—the lamp was dying beside me—a lurid glare was around-my eyes, which had been half closed, opened suddenly wide-I gazed at the foot of the bed, and I there saw the ghastly and bloody figure of the suicide kneeling with uplifted hands and glazed eyes fixed upon me-and I could not move a limb. I would have shut out the fearful object, but my lids refused to close. I felt the eye-balls starting from their sockets. I strove to cover my head with the bed-clothes, but the spectre leaning against them, held them fast. At length a shower of perspiration, cold and clammy, burst from all my I was relieved, though exhausted; and already my eyes became familiarised to the horrid object. I rose up in the bed, and stepped upon the floor. I made the sign of the cross; but the spectre did not disappear. I repeated more. than one prayer; but still it knelt, following me with its leaden gaze. I confess that in my terror the memory of some old superstition, profane, if not blasphemous, crossed my mind; and I muttered, in fear and trembling, some absurd incantations that I learned in boyhood, for exorcising spirits. The spectre stirred not, but a loathsome grin spread across the livid and blood-stained face. At this sight I raised my hands above my head; and I felt the hair stand up on end against my palms, my knees tottered, and my teeth chattered. The spectre seemed to chuckle inwardly, for it shook and grinned—but no sound escaped it.

"'Good God!'cried I, 'I am beset by a fiend—the evil one has thrown himself before me—I am caught in the snare!' The spectre nodded its hideous head, as if in confirmation of my fears. I strove to scream, not exactly for help, for I felt myself hopeless; but in the despairing notion that I might scare away the ghost. My throat was parched—the voice was choked in its attempt at utterance. The spectre never turned its eyes from me, nor relaxed its grin. Can I ever forget that basilisk glance?

"After standing thus for some minutes, all the energy of my despair was aroused, and I prepared to rush through the doorway which was close at the foot of my bed. But the spectre knelt directly across, and whole mountains of adamant had not formed a more impassable barrier than did that horrid shade. I stood again transfixed. Again I prayed; and still the spectre mocked me. It seemed fixed to the place for ever. I heard the village clock strike the hour—it was two. I strove to turn my head towards the window, hoping to see the dawn. I could not move it—the frightful attraction before me kept it firm fixed.

"The quarter struck. I thought an age had elapsed since the tolling of the hour. Another quarter-another-another! Oh, that eternity of horror! The clock struck three—long, solemn peals, that roused the country for leagues; but the spectre stirred not yet. I saw the dawn. The sunbeams that entered belind me at the window stole gradually along the wall at either side; and at length the yellow light fell full upon the spectre, and gilded its odious aspect with a tinge of horrible splendour. The sunbeams shot through it, proving it to be a phantom-yet it maintained all the dreadful reality of matter. Every nerve and fibre of the fleshless form was displayed to me. It was already a half-formed skeleton. I sickened with disgust, and flung myself back upon a chair close to the window. The morning air breathed on me, and I recovered. I heard the cock crow. My heart throbbed with rapture at this summons. I looked to observe the spectre vanish; but it only grinned again, and mocked me with horrid grimaces. I thought of escaping by the window, but as I attempted to rise, I felt as though held down by an immovable

weight of lead. My breast heaved and panted; and I felt suffocating.

"Holy Mary, thought I, can this indeed be real? Surely I sleep-this phantom is only of my brain! At this moment I heard some one in the garden. I made an effort, in desperate delight, to turn my eyes. I did so, and saw the old gardener hobbling across the walk. I was resolved to speak if possible. Another forcible attempt at utterance succeeded. I bade old Simeon good morrow! 'Good morrow, reverend father,' said the pious old man: 'your reverence is up betimes.' It is, it must have been a dream, said I, and I turned my eyes. boldly in the direction of my bed. God! kow I thrilled with agony at seeing the spectre unmoved from its position, unchanged in attitude and look! Reason and fear (that so often o'ermasters reason) combined together to give me almost more than mortal energy—I will not believe this, cried I aloud—I cannot, dare not support it-I am going mad!-Heaven save and protect me, and give me grace under this terrible affliction! Or do I indeed sleep, in spite of all this evidence of waking sensation? Do I, can I indeed sleep? With a wild throb of ecstasy at the revived hope that I slept, I seized in a paroxysm of agitation the water-jug that stood on my table. awake me, if indeed I sleep, exclaimed I, and I flung the whole contents in my face.

"A convulsive and half suffocating sensation in my throat, and a fierce start from the chair on which I sat, were the instant consequences. At the same moment a burst of feeble laughter from a well-known voice broke on my ear. I looked forwards with all my eyes. The spectre had vanished, and I saw in its stead the figure of my own old female attendant standing before me. But in a moment her laugh was followed by a cry of terror. I looked into the glass beside me, and saw with horror, almost equal to hers, that I was covered with blood.

"In an instant I understood the whole appalling pageant. I had indeed been in that state of animated stupor, that doubt-

ful, double existence, between reality and imagination, when the mind and body are half insensible and half alive. Such was the state of my feelings, at once excited and exhausted. And oh, that such may never be the lot of any human being! A night like that is an eternity of misery—a purgatory upon earth—a living hell! But I must not dwell on the subject, its recurrence is horrible—I must let the memory of that dreadful scene moulder away from my brain, as the remnant of that wretched hovel is crumbling in the winds!"

Such was in substance, and nearly word for word, the curé's recital. I confess it made me thrill in the spoken detail. How it may tell on paper, I cannot venture to surmise. But my readers, let them think of it as they may, must not cavil at its title, nor accuse it of promising more than I meant it to perform:—for while I knew I was about to tell "a real ghost story," I never intended to say it was the story of a real ghost.

THE THREE KEARNEYS.

BY ANDREW PICKEN.

Ir was a sad gliff that, that I once got by an affair that occurred in the Irish country while I took up my abode there, and it put my nerves more out of the way than I can well describe now as I am only recollecting the matter as a by-past fact. But such a sight as a father and two sons, an old grey-headed man, and I may say his whole family, going all together, as I saw them go past my door, and in my view, and that of thousands, is such as I hope never to see the like of again; although I do not think that the world is growing better in these last days, half so fast as I could wish it should. Indeed, I am of opinion, that the world must still be a bad world, for all the pains that have been taken with it, else such things could never have happened as I am now musing over, and which makes my heart ache to think of. If any one wishes to know what the affair was, let them sit down with me, and I will tell them as well as I can the whole story.

It was, while I was living within the interior precincts of the flaunting city of Dublin, in the Irish kingdom, that I first began seriously to make my observations on things in general: so wandering to and fro to observe the city, as much as possible, at a distance, rather than in its inner embraces, my walks lay often in those southern environs of the place, that spread off so pleasantly towards the green sloping hills, joining the King's county, which the Irish, in their usual boastful phraseology, choose to dignify by the name of the Dublin mountains. On that side of the city, and on a pleasant elevation, is situated the healthy village of Harold's Cross, and beyond the village towards the said mountains, appear the picturesque policies of Robert Shawfield, Esq., of the Warren, some time a representative in parliament for the Irish metropolis.

Now there lived by the road side beyond Harold's Cross, and near to the fine domain of the Warren, an elderly man and woman, of the name of Kearney, who had two strapping sons living at home with them. These young men bore, however, rather a ne'er-do-well character, and in fact the whole of the Kearneys were known extensively round, as a suspicious and troublesome sort of people. Yet were they, after all, rather well liked and applauded, by their own sort of rabbling clan-jamfrey of the neighbourhood, more, for aught I know, because they neither feared God nor regarded man, than for any good or commendable qualities. The old woman (her name was Judith, or rather Judy, as the people called her) was well named after that strong-stomached amazon who cut off the head of the man with whom she went to consort herself, as we read of in the Apocrypha; for she was known all round to be a perfect born devil, and like many other of the parents of the Irish youth, able to bring up her sons in the practice of all manner of malice and wickedness. We cannot say that the old man was quite as bad as his amiable helpmate (for without doubt, she, as her neighbours would say, was "a sweet nut"), and it was even affirmed that he had occasionally in his life manifested sundry symptoms of a reckless sort of Irish generosity. Besides, the father of this hopeful family had no imagination to invent a wicked plot, yet still he was of a sour and dogged turn, had within him a deep spirit of suspicion and of vengeance, and if he deserved not the praise of having the head to conceive, it could not be denied that he had the hand to execute, the darkest scheme of guilt and cruelty.

In adverting to the subject of the perfectibility of man, particularly in Ireland, it hath always appeared to me an exceedingly wise and reasonable proposal, that in order to purify the

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character of the Irish youth of the lower orders, we should begin by shooting all the parents with a cannon; at least this was the plan of a most reasonable and humane person, who lived about the times of the celebrated Irish Dean, and who had more wisdom than I think it at all convenient to pretend to. But not being versed in metaphysics so as to entitle me to insist upon the execution of this sensible project, the story leads me simply to observe, that at least the young Kearneys of whom we are now speaking, could not be expected to imbibe much of the spirit of godliness and honesty, from the walk and conversation of such parents.

Accordingly, "the boys" were persons of what philosophers would call, "a mixed character," that is to say, they had the usual semi-barbarous virtues of the Irish mountaineers, generous, hospitable, and warm towards those whom they chose for the moment to delight in, but savage and selfish when the fit was over. Still, however, they were rather handsome boys, had the wild and roving eye, of the southern Hibernian, with the showy, spluttering and sploring manner of the ordinary native. A full share of the bad dispositions of mankind, they certainly had inherited, to qualify them for villains; yet still it must have been by their amiable parents alone that these youths were fully instructed in the mystery of iniquity.

The Kearneys had a cow, which lived abroad about the neighbourhood, and some half a dozen pigs, who lived at home, with the family. How the pigs got their living, or indeed the Kearneys themselves, was by no means clearly made out by the most sagacious of the people in the cabins around. But as for the cow, it was no secret, that although an honest and discreet-looking brute, as needed be, she was universally allowed to be a common interloper and a thief, getting her living wherever she could, or rather wherever she was driven, and bringing disgrace and a blush upon all the well-disposed cows, from Harold's Cross to the Dublin mountains. This cow was a constant subject of eyesore and dispute throughout the neighbourhood, and in particular by the servants and retainers of

Mr. Shawfield, of the Warren, for the grass which grew so rich upon the broad meadows of his estate, she had always been peculiarly fond of; and to this predilection the four Kearneys never were known to have made the smallest objection. Mr. Shawfield himself, who knew the character of the Kearneys well, issued several strong proclamations against them and their cow, but to these they were too audacious to pay any attention; and as for his own people whose duty it was to have curbed or punished such doings, they stood too much in awe of the Kearneys themselves, to take any active side against them.

At this time there lived in the neighbourhood, and on the further side of the Warren demesne, a widow woman, who, together with her two daughters, then living at home with her, were held in much favour by the squire, the father of the girls having been long a faithful domestic of the family, and the widow and children being uniformly industrious, and deserving. This woman excited some envy in the neighbourhood, not only from the decided favour shown to her by the squire, but from the way in which she chose to bring up her daughters, whom it was thought she was rearing with a cleanliness very much above their condition. But this neighbourly envy began insensibly to merge into admiration and respect, as the girls grew to womanhood; for though they all lived in much isolation in their cottage near the foot of the Dublin mountains, they were so decidedly superior to all the young women around, that they tacitly came to be held up for a pattern, and one of them, the eldest, began to be quite distinguished and talked of for her beauty.

It was not for a long time known who was the favoured one of all those that now eagerly sought the company of Mattie Connor, and the secret was first discovered by the attentive Mr. Shawfield himself, who, with the virtuous anxiety of a benevolent landlord, kept a sharp watch over the fate of a dependent of so interesting a character. He recognised by accident, but with perfect approval, the lover of Mattie, in the person of an active young fellow, the son of one of his most

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respected tenants; and he secretly resolved, if the youth continued to act as praiseworthily as he had begun, to make him an object of his favour and promotion. This he was the more disposed to do, as Owen Lambert, the young man, had, of his own accord, shown a firmness and a spirit in resisting the provoking freedoms of the Kearneys, such as no one but himself had ventured to attempt. The first thing, therefore, Mr. Shawfield did, was to make Owen Lambert his grieve or park-ranger, entrusting him with the charge of the whole of his policies, and directing his attention, particularly, to the wanton and insulting intrusions of the Kearneys and others, who made repeated depredations on his property.

This new situation, thus conferred upon Lambert, rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the whole of the Kearneys, who saw in his spirit and indefatigable activity, an obstacle and a check, of no trifling power, to their hindrance in their various impudent proceedings. It happened also, about this time, that the eldest of the two younger Kearneys (his name was Pat) having thought fit, as was seldom the case, to accept of a few days' labour on a farm beyond the Warren, and near to the clean cottage of the widow, set his eyes, for the first time, to take particular notice of her, upon the handsome and happy Mattie Connor, and getting at once into a natural sort of savage love, boldly and ardently tried for Mattie's acquaintance.

The reception that Pat Kearney's audacious address received from so a gentle a spirit as Mattie need not be described, particularly as both sisters had been well warned against such company by their mother, the quiet and careful widow of the cottage. The spirit of Kearney was of course too radically bad, and his ignorance too much approaching to ruffian barbarism, to enable him to see or account for, with anything like fairness, the cause and the reasonableness of his decided repulse. So he brooded over his mortification with a sour and grudgeful gloom; and being, like most bad youths, the pet of his mother, to that amiable lady he soon imparted the cause of his sullen looks and his bitter chagrin.

The peculiar curse of conscious wickedness was no new thing to the mother of the Kearneys, that is, the continual dread of being avoided by the good, and the abiding sense that they deserve to be avoided. Amid, therefore, her envious wrath at the gentle and inoffensive widow of the cottage, the beldam had the sagacity to conclude, that some one must be fayoured with the love of Mattie Connor, and a thought having crossed the suspicious brooding of the moment, a strong curiosity took fast hold of her, to know if the person could possibly be the squire's active and daring confident, Owen Lambert. Disdaining to make inquiries of the neighbours, most of whom avoided much familiarity with her or with her dreaded family, she, with the indefinite purpose and dogged perseverance of a malevolent spirit, went night after night, for several trials, to ascertain of a surety, for her inward satisfaction, whether Owen Lambert actually was the youth who, as she had learned, was frequently seen, under the cloud of night, to steal from the lone cottage where Mattie and her mother dwelt.

It so happened, that for several nights at this time, Owen Lambert's duty had prevented him from seeing his Mattie, but on the fourth or fifth he appeared to gladden all the inmates of the cottage, and to carry to his sweetheart the pleasing news of the squire's perfect approbation of their union, and of his having given orders for the preparation of a comfortable cottage for their reception, which stood near the centre of the policies of the warren, and which was expected to be ready for them in less than a fortnight. After partaking of some refreshment with the kind inmates of the cottage, Lambert took his leave, intending to proceed towards home, but Mattie slipped out to be his convoy through the field towards the lane, from the natural wish to enjoy a little talk by themselves, and the parting embrace of him who was so soon to be her's for ever.

As they crossed the field which led towards the road, their whisper, so interesting to both, was somewhat interrupted by their accidentally observing a shapeless figure, moving, or rather stealing along, by the fence beside them. There was scarcely any moon, the figure was in the shadow just by the hedge, and the place being lonesome, and no thoroughfare near, so unexpected an apparition filled both the youth and his betrothed with some apprehension. As they drew near to the stile that parted them from the road, Lambert stood still, determined to wait until the figure would come up, and to address to it the usual challenge of civility.

- "God save you, friend!" was his natural address, as the woman came up, after the manner of the common people in the country parts of Ireland.
- "God save you kindly!" was the hypocritical response of the mother of the Kearneys, and when she came up, and the dull moonbeam discovered the features of the well-known and detested old woman, a shuddering feeling came involuntarily over both of the lovers, from an apprehension that there was something which boded no good to either, in this her unexpected presence and observation.
- "It is far from Harold's Cross for you to be at this hour, Mrs. Kearney," said Lambert, civilly, "but may be ye have lost your way as ye crossed from the mountains. It's a darkish night sure, for all the pretension of a moon."
- "Mind the moulahan at your side, and never mind me, Mr. Lambert," said the old woman, saucily, as she stepped over the stile; "and there's moon enough yet to light me to Harold's Cross if I want to go, but sure ye's both can see to kiss by the moon's glimmer that shows at night where the bog is blackest, although ye's may be may have less light than will serve you to keep the four corners of the Warren free from cute cattle, that ken the differ between the squire's grass and the cotter's cabbage." Thus saying, the old woman went muttering away, and before the lovers could recover their momentary surprise, she was lost in the dark winding of the parrow lane.
 - . "There is something that I do not like forebodes me about

that wicked old woman," said Mattie Connor, laying her hand with alarm on her breast. "I wish no sad thing be yet to happen us, Owen," she added, looking anxiously in the young man's countenance.

"Pooh, never fear, my jewel, Mattie," said Lambert, gaily, and soon, by further expostulation, he succeeded in quelling the fears of his anxious lass. Thus with their usual tenderness they parted for the night, forgetting in pleasanter thoughts this ill-boding encounter.

On the same night three fine sheep were stolen from the flock in the Warren Park, and when the old woman arrived at home, she found her sons washing carefully the blood from off their hands; the supper that already fried on the cottage fire was seasoned with the full tale of her discovery, and sundry taunts and hints, and half-intimated threatenings, addressed to her sons, that made the eyes of the three men flash with a fiendish expression, sadly predicted what was afterwards to be consummated.

Several weeks after this, however, passed quietly away, and now Owen Lambert and Mattie Connor were married and happy, and living in the pleasant honeymoon of their union in the pretty cottage that had been prepared for them in the middle of the Warren policy. The whole neighbourhood seemed disposed to rejoice in their union, from Harold's Cross to the Dublin mountains, excepting, indeed, the Kearney family, whose envy and malice exceeded all bounds, and only wanted an occasion to break out into some deed which should glut and gratify the infernal spirit to which those wretched people had now entirely given way. This feeling of demoniac hate was aggravated, if possible, by the very forbearance, clemency, and advocacy in their favour with the squire, of the sensible and considerate grieve of the warren; and by their being made sensible that he had fully traced the theft of the three sheep to them, and had partly concealed it, and partly taken the blame of their loss upon himself, on account of his temporary absence from the grounds at the time—he wishing, if possible, by fair means and faithful vigilance in future, to prevent, if possible, any further cause of difference between the Kearneys and his master.

But all this cautious and indulgent conduct only served to deepen the hatred of the infatuated family, whose malignant spirit seemed to brood day and night over the provoking good conduct, and still more provoking success of the attentive grieve. The praises which the people of the neighbourhood lavished on the young couple for their looks, as they now appeared in their well-saved clothes of a Sunday, walking arm in arm so lovingly past the Kearneys' very door, to and from the Protestant church in Harold's Cross, was like wormwood to the envious spirit of the three men, and stung them to madness as it was weekly repeated in their ears. Yet with all their malice, the natural dread with which cowardly vice always regards open-fronted virtue and manly good conduct. together with the firm threatening of the squire, so awed the. Kearneys, that they dared not drive their cow into the parks of the warren as they were used to do, and made them waver. in their half-formed purposes of vengeful audacity. But the cow now being expelled from every field and enclosure round, began to be much in want of grass, and to give a stinted measure of the dairy produce, which made the old woman murmur and mutter at the vigilant grieve, and soon to taunt her hopeful "boys" for their cowardly meanness, to think of paying for cow's grass so long as there was so much of it growing rich upon the meadows " of the warren beyant," which might give them all many a meal of good milk for nothing, if it was not for their own chicken-hearted pusillanimity, the devil save them."

It was not hard to advise "the boys," to any outrage which might give provocation to the favoured grieve, so on the morning of the next day, the two in person openly drove their vexatious cow into one of the very best parks of the warren. By the orders of the grieve, if obeyed to the letter, he might at once have poinded the cow, and left the Kearneys to seek their remedy; but having been warned to take care of proceeding to any extremity against such dangerous persons, by the foreboding anxiety of his anxious young wife, he only drove the cow from the park, and even went in person on the same evening to the Kearneys' cottage, to expostulate with them against persisting in proceedings so likely to bring trouble and ruin upon themselves. When he entered their cabin, he unfortunately found no one at home but the hardened old woman, and to his earnest and almost beseeching warning, of what would be the sure result to her husband and sons, if they desisted not from their insulting trespasses, she only replied with a taunting sneer, and a heap of reproaches upon "the garsoon," for his persevering zeal in the execution of his duty.

Two days more had not passed over, when the cow was again found grazing in the same park, and was forthwith driven to the poind, after the whole affair had been laid before the squire. Determined no longer to submit to these repeated outrages, Mr. Shawfield resolved to follow out and punish this last offence with the utmost rigour, particularly as it had been accompanied by a wanton breaking of his fences, such as never before had been attempted, and of which his faithful grieve himself managed to be the eye-witness. Besides, therefore, putting the Kearneys to the usual expenses of the poind, which they paid with dark and uncompunctious reluctance, provoked by their savey and threatening manner. the squire further resolved to make an example of this family. and accordingly summoned the father and eldest son to a court in Dublin, to answer to the charge of a wanton trespass, the grieve being of course the chief yet reluctant witness against them.

The news of the approaching trial of the Kearneys, when it came cautiously to the care of the young wife of the grieve,

Med her with an involuntary and afixious apprellension. She feared something she kilew hot what; she wished the trial was over, and yet slie scarcely knew why; for Mr. Shawfield had given her assurances of the utmost favour and protection to her deserving husband, and had himself called to see her, and to give her his word to that effect. Still as the day drew near. when Owen Lambert was to go into Dublin, she could not divest herself of her foreboding anxiety, for dreadful reports had come to her ears of the horrible threatenings that the Rearneys had been heard to titter against the humane yet vigilant youth. The personal situation of the young wife now helped to therease her tendency to nervous anxiety, and though by day her mind was soothed by argument and assurance, by flight her fattey was haunted with every sort of terrifying image. She had often heard, with a feminine shudder, of the dreadful atrocities of Irish revenge, committed in the wild parts of her unfortunate country, and whenever she tried to sleep, as she lay at midnight, listening for sound or tread without her lonely cottage, dark horrors, burnings, and murders haunted her disturbed slumbers; but when she was awoke by some startling shriek of her imaginary terrors, and found Owen sleeping placidly by her side, she would clasp him to her bosom, with the thankful fondness of a wife, and thus fall asleep, again uttering murmurs of gratitude to Heaven for his safety.

At length the day arrived, previous to the one appointed for the hearing of the charge against the Kearneys, and some feports having been current that this pestiferous family were likely from hence to be forced entirely from the neighbourhood, gave confidence and spirits to the anxious wife, so that the day wore over with unusual comfort. In the afternoon the young couple were visited at their cottage by Widow Connor, Mattie's mother, who staid with them till after nightfall, and the evening was spent with affectionate and gay hilarity. At length, the mother-in-law rose to depart, and Owen rose also, in order to accompany her, at least part of the way, across the

fields towards her cottage. But when he went to the door, and, opening it, looked out upon the dark sky, and across the obscure fields as far as he could see, and heard the low wind sighing through the sweeping plantain, and the murmur of the distant river which hummed beyond the warren, a pulse of involuntary dread struck at his heart, and he felt this night a reluctance to entrust himself without, such as he never before remembered to have come over him. But he did not express anything to indicate this in the presence of his wife, although he went without and looked round, and came in again, and appeared thoughtful and restless, and did not move for some time after the widow had intimated her intention to leave the cottage.

His wife was somewhat struck with his manner, and at first made an objection to his going with her mother, which he, in the spirit of hospitable courage, would by no means listen to; so her former fears having by this time been much dispelled, she made little opposition, and with an affectionate look in her face as he parted from her, away he went to be convoy to the widow, with many charges from Mattie, that if he observed nothing which might require his presence without, he should speedily return, to enjoy his rest and her advice, hefore what was to take place on the following day.

Lambert had not gone far from the door across the fields, the young wife being left in the cottage alone, when the thought smote her, that she ought not to have allowed her Owen to leave his own home at night, at least until the trial was over. An ominous dread now came over her concerning him, and she began to feel an anxiety for his safety, that became perfectly intolerable. All the usual reasonings in such circumstances, she called in to check the intensity of her uneasy apprehensions, as she waited with impatience in the empty dwelling, and listened eagerly, trying to hear his distant footsteps. An hour—two hours, passed entirely away and still she listened, until she could audibly hear the hard beating of her own heart, but no other sound was there to indicate his

coming, or to relieve the dreadful horror of her fevered imaginings. She went out from the cottage door with the lamp in her hand. It cast a feeble and limited glance towards the dark meadows, but all lay shrouded in silence and obscurity, and him whom she looked for, came not. As it wore towards midnight, without his making his appearance, the young woman sat like a statue, in the midst of her terrors, or paced about the cottage in incipient distraction. She next seized the little cloak that hung by the wall, and throwing it round her, rushed into the dark fields to seek for her husband.

She wandered some way over the wet grass, and still she could see no one, but sometimes, as she stopped to listen, she thought she could hear the voices of men in the dark distance, and clamours and struggling sounds seemed to come over her eager ear, and again she thought she could even distinguish faint shrieks and low groans, carried upon the tell-tale wings of the passing blast. But this reality or fancy was too much for her nerves to bear, and she stood for a time stock still in the meadow. The cold wind of midnight now blew chill in her face, and nameless terrors came with more than freezing power over her heart, until becoming alarmed lest she should faint beside the planting, she made a great effort to retrace her steps, and with much difficulty was barely able to reach her empty and disconsolate dwelling.

It is not for me to attempt to describe how the poor young woman got over this dreadful night. But hour after hour passed like ages away, and when daylight came without the return of her Owen, she lost the sense of her distress in the relief of overpowering insensibility. In this state was Mattie Lambert found by a neighbour, who came to inquire for her husband before his going to Dublin to attend the much-talked-of trial of the Kearneys.

Mr. Shawfield at this time was living in his house in Dublin, and being much interested in the present business, from the repeated annoyances of the Kearneys, was early in court on

this morning of the trial, or rather of the simple exhibition of a charge to which they were bound over to appear, add took his seat on the bench near the magistrates for the hearing. The case was soon called, but though he had observed the Kearneys to be early in court; his faithful grieve had not yet made his appearance. Something unknown might have prevented the witness's early attendance, and the squire got the case put off till a late hour in the day, and now he became seriously uneasy, for still Owen Lambert appeared not. The magistrate was now ready for this last case, and, thable to delay the hearing, went somewhat into the charge in the case—but on the principal witness being again repeatedly called in court, still the grieve appeared not.

The anxious squire looked among the crowd in vain, and an impudent sneer was manifest in the countenances of the three Kearneys, their beldam-mother, who stood behind, regarding with laughter the aldermen on the bench. While the court now consulted as to the propriety of dismissing this case for want of evidence, the elder of the Kearneys looking towards the bench, and smilling saucily as he turned towards the squire, uttered this strange and impertinent speech,—

"Robert Shawfield, Esq. Mr. P.—where is the fine witness that ye were to have brought to swear against me and my boys. If ye have him, why don't he come forward?"

The pain that Mr. Shawfield felt at the impertinence of this speech, was nought to the thought that struck him at the moment, as he gazed severely in the face of the taunting old man.

"I request that these three men;" said he, "may be instantly taken into custody, under the charge at least of stealing from off my property three sheep, which I shall prove by other witnesses besides him who was to have appeared this morning against them. Heaven grant that they may have no greater guilt than this last to account for, both to God and man!"

The words had searcely been spoken, when a messenger arrived from the warren to inform the squire, that the gricve, having left his cottage on the previous night, had never returned; and that search having been made for him every where, no traces of him were to be found, but that certain marks of a struggle had been observed on the side of a bank, and strong suspicions were every where abroad, that the unfortunate man had met with a cruel death by the hands of these Kearneys, who had long used open threatenings against him. The horror of the master and friend of the deserving grieve, and of the whole court at hearing this intelligence, need not be dwelt upon. Warrants were granted on the instant, both to make search for the body and to investigate carefully the marks and appearances of everything that should be found within the cottage of the Kearneys, which might furnish any evidence concerning the murder.

It was a melancholy and a tedious work, the search that took place for the lifeless body of the unfortunate young man. The cry was so unusual, and the sensation so great, that vohuntary parties were formed of the people around, to assist in the search, both for the sad satisfaction of the distracted widow, if she could be recovered—for the poor creature was by this time insensible to all around her-and to find legal evidence against the ruthless murderers. Every ditch was raked for many miles round, every pool and pond was dragged from Harold's Cross to the Dublin mountains, every spadeful of earth that had been recently dug up, was moved and tried below the surface, but stiff all in vain. Whether the body of the grieve had been thrown into the stream that ran beyond the warren, and might have been earried towards the sea before the search commenced, or whether it could have been buried under the sands at the bottom, which prevented its ever being fraced, or how else it could have been disposed of, was never lindwin; but the wretched widow never had the satisfaction of secing even the mangled corpse of him, of whom she constantly faved, nor was there legal proof exhibited of the actual murder, ----for the body of Lambert was never found.

Am alarming feeling came over all who knew of this nameder,

lest, after all, the Kearneys should, for want of evidence, be suffered to escape; for although during the search, an ax had been found in their cottage, from which the blood was imperfectly cleaned, and whereon still stuck some of the clotted hair of the victim of their cruelty; and though the marks of shoes and the print of the ribbed corderoy of a heavily set down knee, corresponding with these articles worn by the Kearneys, appeared on that spot in the warren, where an evident struggle had takenplace, yet the body never having been produced, with other legal defects in the evidence, gave alarming indication to the people round, that the crafty Kearneys would yet get free of the capital charge. But the eye of Heaven, that neither slumbers nor sleeps, had seen, during the darkness, what no human eye but those engaged in the murder had been suffered to witness, and had decreed that such atrocity should not escape its punishment; and the law itself contained a clause which embraced the whole of those to whom vengeance was due. The malice of the Kearneys had been so inveterate, particularly since the pointing of their cow, and so openly manifested to all the neighbourhood, that it furnished out of their own mouths the means of their condemnation; not for the actual crime which might not clearly have been brought home to them, but for a deliberate conspiracy to murder, of which there existed abundance of evidence. Upon this point then the whole were arraigned, and though, from some circumstance, the old woman, who was well understood to have instigated the whole, was reluctantly acquitted, the three men, namely, the father and his two sons, were tried and condemned to suffer on the very spot beyond Harold's Cross, where the horrid deed was supposed to have been perpetrated.

I am now come to speak of that sickening gliff that came over my heart, at the sight which I witnessed one morning as I sat at my window, in the long suburban street as you go towards Harold's Cross, from the city of Dublin. It was a quiet close morning, and drawing towards noon, when I sat musing at my window, as I say, and thinking within myself

of God's goodness and man's deceits, for the day was Monday, and certain things came soothingly over my thoughts, which I had heard in the house of prayer, during the solemnities of the previous day's worship. Surely, said I, goodness and mercy hath still followed me all my life long, even into this discontented kingdom of the Irish, and as to the wickedness of the wicked, which is wrought in secret places of the earth, I have still been preserved, even from knowing the depth and the breadth thereof.

I was communing with myself in this comforting way, and so abstract in my inward meditation that I did not pay any attention, although I partly saw the people beginning to lift their windows all round, and those on the street beneath, running hastily from that end of the suburb to which my back was all the while turned. I have been often called stupid, and so I am, when any thing takes my thoughts away into meditative abstraction; so I never troubled myself to turn round my head, until the clatter of an host of horses' feet came over my ears from behind, and a wild cry of "the Kearneys! the Kearneys!" accompanied the sudden rising of the surrounding windows.

What a strange and impressive cavalcade was this, which, with the immense and horrified crowd that followed it, was now almost under my very window. There were horsemen behind and horsemen before, but no music, or sound such as usually accompanies a military spectacle, and the buzz and murmur that ran through the multitude had an awfulness in it, as if it were the low and deep voice of justice herself, and seemed to have the sternness mixed with the horror, of a generally awarded and righteous sentence of death. There was something very dreadful in the arrangement of the cavalcade. Behind the first troop of military, came three vehicles of the lowest sort used as conveyances in Ireland, called jingles; which being a species of double car, upon springs, are considerably elevated above the heads of the people. these carried a temporary gallows, which was to be erected on the spot where the murder had been committed; the last contained three coffins; and in the centre jingle sat the wretched men, the execuated objects of this horrid preparation.

"Lord save us," said I, as I surveyed the whole, "but it is an awful sight, to see a father and his two sons carted off together to their death," two of them young and even handsome men, and, together with the father, such as you never could have supposed, from their looks, to be capable of committing so atrocious a deed. The three sat together in the jingle, with a bareheaded priest placed between each, and holding a crucifix close to their faces. They were all dressed in black, their arms pinioned to their sides, with the white caps of execution on their heads, and the ropes already hanging from their bared necks. The wanness of death already gave their countenances a blanched cadaverousness, which was absolutely fearful to behold; the young men, in particular, seemed quite overcome with the horror of guilt and of their situation, and had lost all power over themselves, so that as the vehicle jolted slowly on to their death, their heads wagged backwards and forwards with every motion, and when they ventured to try to look before or behind, their eye fixed on the great frightful gallows, rumbling on in their view, on which they were about to be suspended by the neck, and behind came the row of coffins, which already gaped for their corpses. The crowd that moved on at their side looked up in their languid countenances with impressions, such as could not easily be effaced, and the only sounds that were heard, besides the suppressed murmur of the people, was a startling howl, which now and then burst from a band of women, who followed the car bearing the coffins, among which was the wretched wife of one, and mother of two of the men whom she was, with characteristic hardiness, now following to the gibbet.

The melancholy procession passed away from before my eyes, and the occasional howl of the women came with sickening impression over my ears, as the whole moved off in the distance, and as I reflected upon the miserable end of all incorrigible workers of iniquity. I was afterwards told by those who witnessed the execution, that the hardened old wretch, who had urged her family into the commission of these atrocities, had the heart to stand at the gallows' foot, while that husband and these two sons, which constituted all her earthly ties, were for the crimes to which she had encouraged them, struggling in the agonies which launched them into eternity.

But the most painful part of this whole tragedy related to the unfortunate widow of the murdered grieve, whom her terrible misfortune had entirely bereft of her senses, and for whom the sympathetic squire made ample provision, as a confirmed and hopeless lunatic. The broken-hearted widow took her unfortunate daughter back to her cottage, and willingly aided in the delusion into which the poor creature had gradually fallen; that Owen Lambert was still attending the trial of the Kearneys, from which he was hourly expected to return. Whenever, therefore, the morning was fine, the interesting maniac went forth and sat patiently on a stone at the door, to wait, as she said, until her Owen came home from Dublin.

Curiosity and that melancholy interest with which unmerited misfortune is always invested, led me one day to swerve off my way as I went to the Dublin mountains, to try if I could see her. Sure enough, as the people there say, I did see this pretty and demented young widow, sitting as usual in the sunshine at the cottage-door, and singing sillily to herself, as she carelessly knitted some trifling article. When she perceived me she rose, and looking anxiously in my face, came forward to meet me. "Begging your pardon, Sir," she said in the liquid softness of the Dublin patois, and curtseying as she drew near, "did your honour come from Dublin this morning?"

"I did," said I sadly, observing the poor thing's look of melancholy anxiety.

"May be, Sir," she continued, "you can tell me something of one Owen Lambert, that's there at the trial.—Ah, he is long, long, of coming!"

- "So he is," said I, but you'll see him by-and-by."
- "Will I?" she said, a gleam of joy coming over her features. "Alas! but I am weary, weary, so long waiting to meet him."

"Are you?" I said, forgetting, in my pity, the poor girl's insanity. "God help you! broken-heart,—but you will meet him, I doubt not, in a better world!"

RECOLLECTIONS OF EHRENBREITSTEIN.

BY R. BERNAL, M. P.

READER! in these bustling times of locomotion and enterprise, the chances are undoubtedly more than four to one, that you have visited the town of Coblentz, and have become well acquainted with its localities and surrounding scenery. There is scarcely, I conceive, one moderate rambler to be found between the *termini* of Grosvenor-gate and Mile-end, who has not performed this home-circuit tour, or who remains ignorant of the banks of the Rhine, facing the far-famed heights and fortress of Ehrenbreitstein.

It will afford pleasant food for meditation, while standing on the bridge of boats at Coblentz, under the auspices of a clear and sunny day, to contemplate at your ease the beauties of the azure and undisturbed vault of heaven, reflected in the bright river beneath, and to contrast the peaceful works of a Beneficent Providence with the result of the labours of that turbulent creature, man, breathing war, defiance and destruction.

Ramparts, bastions, curtains and embrasures, towering one upon the other, here display the various and easy modes by which the perfection of modern science has attained the art of converting real gold into stone, thereby reversing the old order of things, when philosophers toiled to transmute the latter material into the glittering metal. We are wiser in

our generation—but, by the by, after all, will the very liberal expenditure of Nassau granite, engineering skill, and Prussian dollars, which the vast fortifications of Ehrenbreitstein have occasioned, answer its intended purpose—the construction of an *impregnable* fortress? True it is, that on the waterside, this stupendous pile would appear to challenge the combined efforts of all the armies of Europe; but on one or two points, in the line of its landward direction, is there not some demonstration of a vulnerable and assailable quarter?

Such was the train of reflexion and doubt, in which I was indulging, as, sipping my Hockheim wine and Seltzer water after an early dinner, I gazed upon the Rhine and the frowning battlements from the windows of the hotel der Drey Schweitzen. It would have been as well, if I had contented myself with gazing, meditating, dubitating, and sipping, and with the enjoyment of my tranquil and enviable position. But I was anxious to inspect the interior of this paragon of military architecture, having omitted so to do in a former excursion to the Rhenish provinces; and crossing the river, I accordingly sauntered up the steep ascent to the outer gate of the walls of the fortress. Addressing myself in but indifferent German to the sentry on duty, I made known my wishes; to which, he (in the usual laconic manner of all sentries on duty throughout the known world) replied, that he could not admit me. Assuming all the consequence with which a migratory John Bull invests himself when out of his own country, whether he be in the right or in the wrong, I endeavoured to impress upon him, that I was an Englishman, and that I ought to be allowed to enter, as I had a passport, signed by the Prussian minister at London. .. The soldier seemed to yield to my reasoning, for he suffered me to pass on, directing me to knock at the wicket door in the gate on the drawbridge. Upon being admitted into one of the court-yards of the castle, I was ushered into a guardroom, and interrogated by the serjeant of the guard as to my business. Not trusting much to my facility of explanation in

the German language, I briefly answered, that I wished to see the interior of the fortress, and opening my pocket-book, I exhibited my passport; and moreover very thoughtlessly offered him, in the presence of his comrades, a half dollar to guide me round the buildings. The serjeant was violently irritated; and hurrying me mest unceremoniously out of the guard-room, gave utterance to his anger in no very piano tones. I did not understand half he said, but I comprehended sufficiently, that he accused me of having attempted to bribe him, and of having deceived the sentinel on the other side of the drawbridge; remarking, it was well known in the neighbourhood, that no one could be admitted to inspect the interior without an order from the commandant. mence of his remonstrances excited the attention of two or three officers, and also of a lady, of attractive form and person, who stood at a little distance, within hearing: I was not a little nettled, at being thus made an object of ridicule to the party, who appeared not only to approve of the serjeant's proceedings, but to be much amused by them; and I could easily distinguish the playful smile that enlivened the countenance of the fair spectatress when I was fairly turned out of the castle-yard.

It soldom happens, that when one has been in error, one has the good sense immediately to acknowledge it, even mentally; so I hurried down the hill, in peevish temper, muttering a few kind compliments to all Prussian soldiers and fortresses. Careless, as to the way I strolled, I walked along the riverside, towards a large garden, in which a smooth, well-watered turf, and shady avenues of lefty trees invited me to enter. The whole appearance of this garden denoted its being a place of occasional public entertainment or resort; although, at the time, there was not any other visitor within its precincts, besides myself.

I took advantage of a rustic seat, under the spreading branches of a full grown walnut-tree, to dissipate my ill-humour by

a gentle slumber, which the refreshing shade and agreeable solitude quickly induced.

How long I slept, I know not, but I was roused by the sound of a light footstep upon the gravel walk that led to the walnut-tree. I was surprised to behold, in the intruder upon my repose, a young and elegant lady, who, unattended, was walking slowly backwards and forwards in front of the seat I occupied, but still never proceeding to any great distance. At almost the first glance, I recognised her to be the same female, whose risible faculties had been so agreeably moved by my awkward expulsion from the gates of Ehrenbreitstein. She was remarkably handsome in face and figure, and she had that air of grace and good-breeding which is so easily perceptible by any observer.

The recognition did not appear to be mutual; however, I could not help being struck by the evident embarrassment she betrayed, and the earnestness and frequency of the looks she directed towards me.

By degrees, the promenade, in which this interesting stranger indulged, became more limited in its extent, while at the same time she approached nearer to my comfortable seat. Her eyes at last appeared to be fixed upon me, with so singular an expression of anxiety, as if watching the slightest movement on my part, and the colour suffused her transparent cheeks so decidedly, that I felt somewhat abashed, when I hesitatingly addressed some words in German to her.

That little feeling of vanity, which, in spite of all outward and visible signs of its folly, and of all inward and silent consciousness of its deceit, will nevertheless cling to the heart of every descendant of Adam, did not fail to exercise its influence over me. I was childish enough to imagine, that there must have been something peculiarly captivating and ingratiating in my exterior, although most certainly I had never been celebrated either for my good looks or my good fortune.

But to do strict justice to the fair lady, her manner, though it might be termed equivocal, displayed nothing of offensive levity or coquetry; still she persevered in pacing, with short and quick steps, in front of the tree, turning her eyes repeatedly in the same direction.

This extraordinary conduct continued upwards of half an hour, until suddenly, with considerable agitation and impatience, she advanced rapidly towards me, and without uttering a single word, when she reached the bench, on which I was seated, she passed one of her soft and white arms round the back of my neck.

I was thunderstruck at this unexpected and singular salutation, and remained doubtful of what was to follow; but just as I had mustered up sufficient resolution, and had commenced a most tender speech, she withdrew her arm, and, at the same time, a sealed letter from a crevice in the walnut-tree, behind the bench.

The act was so unlooked-for and instantaneous, as only to allow me the opportunity of remarking the extreme eagerness with which she, in vain, attempted to conceal the paper in her small and lovely hand, and of observing, that on one of her fingers she wore a sparkling emerald ring. She made me a slight curtsy, accompanying it with one of those taunting smiles, by which I had before been favoured in the court-yard of Ehrenbreitstein, and then, flying like an antelope across the grass, she was soon out of sight.

I must confess, that I was not a little mortified at the termination of my rencontre; no man, with the slightest pretensions to good taste and feeling, likes to cut a ridiculous figure in the eyes of any young and beautiful woman; twice, in the same day, this had been my fate; and on the second occasion, I had caricatured myself, as it were, by the absurd attempts at German gallantry, which I had made, in utter defiance of all grammar and euphony.

But the twilight was fast approaching, and I reflected that it would be absurd to annoy myself any more, about a female who assuredly was engaged in no very creditable pursuit; therefore, philosophically lamenting the frailty of the sex (though I could not help thinking of the agreeable sensations I had at first experienced under the walnut-tree), I hade adieu to all my spleen, peevishness, and mortification, and to all farther adventures, and turned my steps homewards.

A large company had assembled at supper at the table d'hôte; I took my place at the lower end of the room, where two officers in uniform, apparently belonging to the garrison, were seated, with some of their acquaintance, who had recently arrived at the hotel. My fellow-guests were disposed to be communicative; a joyous spirit of good fellowship prevailed; the wine passed briskly, while an unreserved conversation in the French language was maintained between us. It appeared that the officers, the elder of whom was a colonel commanding the artillery at Ehrenbreitstein, had supped at the hotel, to meet their friends travelling through Coblentz.

Emboldened by the assistance of some excellent Rüdesheim wine, and by my comparative fluency in French conversation, I talked away, perhaps with greater animation, and more at random, than any discreet stranger would have done at a public table. Curiosity led me to seek, if possible, for some particulars of the handsome incognita, whom I had so strangely encountered in the former part of the evening.

Without any ceremony, I inquired of the colonel, if, acquainted as he must be with the inmates of Ehrenbreitstein, and the families in Coblentz, he could particularly remember any young lady of most superior personal attractions, and who was in the habit of wearing a rose-coloured hat and shawl.

"Your inquiry is rather general and indefinite, in a district where so many pretty women abound. Can you not give me any more accurate directions?" the colonel good-humouredly replied.

"Oh!" I immediately exclaimed, "she has long flaxen ring-

lets, blue eyes, with a slight scar on her right cheek, rather tall in stature—but she is altogether strikingly handsome; and I have reason to believe she must be well known within the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein."

- "Long flaxen ringlets, a slight scar on the right cheek, and well known within the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein," the colonel slowly repeated.
- "Yes; I am certain I am correct in my description," I said; "I should know the lady again, any where; such winning smiles! such a transparent complexion!" while, warmed with the juice of the Rhenish grape, I loudly added, "such a white and lovely arm, and such a soft and delicate hand!"
- ** Soft and delicate hand!" the officer exclaimed, in some surprise.
- "We are not all born to equal good fortune," I jocularly answered. "I have had the happiness of acknowledging the delightful influence of many fair hands, but never before, in my life, did I feel the pressure of one half so soft and delicate. It required not the ornament of the bright emerald which sparkled on her taper finger."
- "An emerald ring in the bargain!" the officer gravely remarked; "pray allow me to ask, do you remember the dress she wore?"
- "Perfectly—a rose-coloured hat and shawl, as I before mentioned," was my reply.
- "But on what grounds do you conjecture that the lady in question must be well known within the walls of Ehrenbreitstein?" the other military gentleman asked.
- "Simply, my good friend, because I myself saw her there this afternoon."
- "Ah!" cried the colonel, rather impatiently; "but, sir, you no doubt will condescend to favour me with the recital of the interesting adventure, in which you appear to have played so prominent a part with this fascinating lady, as to be enabled to speak most pointedly on the subject of her particular attractions."

"Pardon me, colonel," I answered; "the sacred laws of gallantry, in every quarter of the globe require—"

"An end to all ceremony—to all secrets! no monopoly of the pressure of a soft and lovely arm amongst boon companions!" was the merry exclamation of the little party at our end of the table, who had been listening to and laughing at the conversation. This interruption did not appear to please the officer, who looked much discomposed. The wine, I believe, had unloosed my tongue; and, not having really a very high opinion of the character of my fair acquaintance, I was silly enough to carry on the conversation in the same bantering style.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I crave your indulgence:—women have the same virtues and the same failings all over the globe. I will not be tempted to betray a secret;—all I can disclose, is, that this evening, in a solitary garden on the other side of the river, under the sheltering foliage of a walnut-tree—But, colonel, what is the matter?" I added; "you surely are acquainted with my beautiful incognita."

"Sir," replied the colonel, very deliberately, distinctly, and, as I thought, sternly, "I am, I believe; the lady is Madame Von Lensdorff—my wife."

The colonel's precise and unexpected answer and information completely sobered my lively spirits; indeed, no one of the party exhibited any desire to say one word more on the subject. There was not amongst them the slightest inclination to laugh; and the characteristic gravity of the Germans again took possession of their countenances. I felt not a little vexed and ashamed, and, I must own, I was also rather restless and uneasy, when I observed our little party preparing to quit their places at the supper-table, and that the colonel and his military friend were apart from the rest, whispering together. I bowed to all, and was leaving the apartment, when the junior officer came up to me, and, in a low tone of voice, said, "After what has passed thus publicly,

you will expect to hear further from my friend to-morrow morning."

I reached my bed-room, in a most disagreeable frame of mind. Owing to my own foolish conduct, I was on the eve of being involved in a quarrel with a total stranger, respecting another person, of whom I equally knew nothing; and although, in fact, there was no point, seriously to fasten a quarrel upon, yet I had, by my indiscreet babbling and jesting at a public table, committed myself decidedly. And how was I to extricate myself from this embarrassment? An apology to the wounded feelings of the officer was all mighty Not pretending to be any volunteering fire-eater or swash-buckler, I had no particular fancy for a bullet-hole in my thorax or a sabre-cut through my cranium. an apology alone be sufficient to satisfy the irritated colonel? -Surely not, I thought; he would naturally demand a true and explicit explanation of every circumstance connected with the garden-scene and my boasted adventures; and, though I knew nothing of or cared not a farthing for Madame Von Lensdorff, and had every reason, from what I had seen, to entertain an unfavourable impression of her character, could I (with any common regard to gentlemanly conduct) resolve to betray what I had witnessed, and to disclose the fact of her resorting to the garden for the purpose of carrying on a secret correspondence, her abstraction of the letter, &c.? the worst part of my situation was, that I had no time to lose; I was on my way to Baden, and had arranged to take my departure by the Mayence steam-boat, which was to pass by Coblentz at an early hour on the following day. In short, I was on the point of entering upon one of the most serious and critical undertakings in life-I was going to be married; and my intended, with her mother, had been residing some weeks at Baden, for the benefit of the health of the latter, and had been anxious to return to England, only waiting for my arrival to escort them.

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Circumstances had already detained me a week behind my time, and I had not been able to make up for this delay, by hurrying on from Rotterdam immediately upon my landing Before I retired to bed, I opened my pocket-book to take out my passport, when I was alarmed at not finding my letters of credit, which, as I thought, had been safely deposited therein. In vain, I turned out, over and over again, the contents of my travelling trunk, and examined every corner of my room—the letters of credit had unaccountably disappeared, and I remained with only a few florins in my pocket. Here was a new and fertile source of vexation and To sleep-to rest-was impossible; without a friend, without money, what was I to do? I fretted through every hour of the tedious night; and when, from sheer fatigue, I fell into a doze in the morning, I was at last awakened by the sound of the horn of the passing steam-boat; but it would have been impossible for me (even if I had been ready) to have left Coblentz, situated as I was at that moment.

I had not completely dressed myself, indeed the hour of ten had scarcely struck, when one of the attendants of the inn brought me a note, which, he said, had been left for me very early that morning. Though the name on the address was misspelt, it was evidently intended for me, and I knew that the names of the inmates of any German hotel were easily obtained. Written in French, in a female hand, the note was from the heroine of my preceding day's rencontre; its purport expressed, in elegant and concise language, the writer's sorrow at my having been guilty of the indiscretion of compromissing the honour and character of a lady (of whom I could know nothing) at a public table; and it appealed to my honour and feeling, as an Englishman and a gentleman, to avoid, at all risks, disclosing anything which I might have witnessed as to the letter concealed in the walnuttree.

I had barely time to ponder on the contents of this singu-

lar note, or to reflect on the dilemma in which I had involved myself, when a tap at my door announced a visitor. The military friend of the colonel made his appearance; and I thought, as he stalked into the room, that his moustaches were fiercer and longer than any I had ever before beheld. He entered upon the object of his visit without any circumlocution—I had offered a serious offence to his friend, before several persons at a public table, upon a topic of the most delicate nature—honour necessarily demanded the most rigid and satisfactory explanation of every particular attending my interview with Madame Von Lensdorff; and he hinted that, even in such case, the most ample apology might not afterwards be sufficient, as circumstances might render only one alternative conclusive.

I stated, in reply, my regret, that inadvertently, I had been, in the mirthful impulse of the moment, induced to utter anything which could wound the feelings of the colonel; that I could solemnly declare, as far as I was concerned, I never had known anything derogatory to the character of Madame Von Lensdorff. The remark he made on this avowal was natural and to be expected: "It may be true," he said; "but you must be aware there is much—very much to explain; and, in such a serious matter, there can be no reserve or concealment."

I paused for a few moments, to consider what answer I could possibly return. Determined, however, to pursue a frank course with this gentleman, I represented to him, the perplexing position in which I was placed, and the imperative call for my immediate presence at Baden. I allowed that Colonel Von Lensdorff was justified in expecting from me an explanation or satisfaction for what had occurred; and I only requested the delay of a very few days, in order to enable me to go to and return from Baden, and to complete some arrangements. At that place, I was likely to secure the counsel and assistance of a male friend who (as I believed) had not yet left it; and I pledged my honour to return to Coblentz by a

week at farthest. The officer was by no means unreasonable; and, though he did not fail to insist on the painful situation in which his friend would remain, he acquiesced, however unwillingly, in my proposition, accepting of my undertaking that the delay should be as short as possible.

Upon the termination of this very gratifying visit, I hardly knew what to resolve upon. As far as regarded my affair with the colonel, it was but the postponing of the day of an unpleasant reckoning, and how to extricate myself from this entanglement would still remain very difficult to discover. relied much, however, on the prudence and good sense of my male friend at Baden, by whose advice I intended to abide. It was by no means consolatory to my feelings to leave Coblentz under the probable slur of having declined to act as a man of honour; nor was it, in any way, a matter of pleasant reflection, to be exposed to the chance, in perspective, of being shot, on account of a woman whom I had never before seen in my life, and for whom I felt no interest whatever. I had also other cares and perplexities; namely, those which invariably attend upon a man who has to travel to any distance without money or credit. I foresaw that not only the imputation of being deficient in spirit, but also that of being a genteel swindler, might be cast upon me, and perhaps with some show of reason and justice. But time was wearing on, and I had to make inquiries for my missing letters of credit. Could I have lost them in the unfortunate garden on the preceding evening? no, that was impossible. Two or three hours were soon wasted in futile conjectures and unsuccessful attempts to regain my papers. At last, I determined to state my case boldly to the landlord. He generously and readily listened to my assertions, and advanced me sufficient money for the expenses of my journey; I, at the same time, leaving a valuable watch which I possessed, in his hands, as a pledge for the repayment of the loan.

There was no other steam or passage-boat of any kind whatever during the remainder of the day; and it was late in



the afternoon, before I had procured a cabriolet and posthorses. I arrived at Baden in much less time than I could have anticipated; but great was my mortification and disquietude, to find that all my three friends had quitted Baden, the ladies having left it on the very day on which I arrived at Coblentz. No other course remained for me, but to retrace my steps back again to Coblentz.

Upon my arrival in that town, I drove at once to my old quarters, in bad spirits and in equally bad humour. The first information which I received from my kind host of the *Drey Schweitzen*, was, that my letters of credit had been found, and were in his possession; a serjeant from Ehrenbreitstein having brought them on the same evening I left Coblentz, stating, that he had picked them up in the guard-room (where, no doubt, they had fallen out of my pocket-book when I exhibited my passport), and he had, in consequence of inquiries made through some of his superior officers, ascertained that the owner was lodging at the *Drey Schweitzen*.

This was a cheering welcome on my return; but the land-lord had still more pleasing intelligence in reserve for me; he informed me, that two ladies had been anxiously inquiring for me at the hotel, and who, from the description he gave, were undoubtedly my Baden friends. Upon mine host having mentioned to them my sudden expedition, they had left word, that they were awaiting my return to Coblentz, and were staying at Maas's hotel.

I shall be readily credited, when I state, that I did not stop for any more detailed information, or to inquire if my pugnacious and whiskered visitor from Ehrenbreitstein had been looking out for my return. I hurried off, at once, to Maas's hotel, my mind naturally replete with lively hopes and anticipations of the future, although the reminiscence of the awkward scrape in which I was still entangled, hovered, like an evil genius over all my gay visions.

As I was turning into the square, in which the hotel was

situated, my attention was attracted by two ladies and a gentleman who were approaching in the same direction, from another street. I could scarcely trust to the correctness of my eyesight, when I beheld my friend, the colonel, with his lovely and volatile helpmate; and, ye heavenly powers! Louisa, my intended wife. They did not observe me, but I had full leisure and opportunity to convince myself, that my eyes had not deceived me. The party appeared in high spirits, to be upon intimate terms, and as if their acquaintance had been of long duration. The colonel, in smart regimentals, had an arm for either lady, and was conversing with both, seemingly upon some subject that afforded them great entertainment. Madame Von Lensdorff wore the identical rose-coloured hat and shawl, which I had (Marplot-like) chosen to remember so very inconveniently on a former occasion.

Louisa looked (or I might have fancied so) more beautiful than ever; but I will not attempt to describe what cannot be described.

Something like a pang of jealousy vibrated through my heart, while I fancied that by an unaccountable contingency the colonel had discovered the means of amply revenging himself for my mal-à-propos conduct. But what added fuel to my growing trascible feelings, was the thought, that my Louisa should have formed so sudden and unfortunate an acquaintance with any woman like Madame Von Lensdorff, whose character (to say the least, I had had ocular demonstration) could not be unexceptionable; and that her once suspicious and justly indignant husband, too, should so spon have smothered all his doubts and indignation, and have forgotten all the equivocal mystery, in which my narration had placed his wife, and should now be, to all appearance, the smiling hero of domestic gallantry. I watched them into the gates of the botel, and then absolutely, in a fit of spleen and vexation, turned my steps in a contrary course, rambling through the streets of Coblentz without an object. My love of peace and repugnance to discord had vanished.

I was ready to fight with the whole corps militaire, from the staff down to the youngest sub-lieutenant. I could have quarrelled with every old woman who obstructed the pave-When twenty minutes or so had elapsed, my valous and my spleen had evaporated, and I judged that it might prove more agreeable to find Louisa and her mother alone at their hotel. So I turned back again to that quarter, under the influence of a curiously confused chaos of sensations. Upon asking for my friends, I was ushered up stairs to the apartments which they occupied, and the first object that greeted me upon my entrance into the ante-room, was the confounded cocked hat and feather of the colonel, lying on a slab facing the door, as it were, in open defiance and devision. But before I had time to brood over this inauspicious omen, the meeting and welcome I experienced from Louisa. and her mother had proved to me, that there were really in this world some things worth living for. The lively, and engaging accents of Louisa, as she rather archly said, "but I must not neglect introducing you to my friends," drew my attention to the presence of Colonel Von Lensdorff and his fair wife, who, seated most tranquilly upon a sofa, were, to all appearances, perfectly at home and at their ease. For myself, I was quite confounded—such a contre-temps—how could it be explained, concealed, or passed over? I hardly ventured to raise my eyes towards my interesting garden acquaintance; however, encouraged by the distinct sound of a suppressed laugh, I hazarded a reconnoitring look. There were the same fair ringlets—the same fascinating eyes -the little scar on the right cheek-and the provoking smile which now seemed to play in full force and attraction. I could espy no trace of confusion or fear in her face or manner; while, to my utter astonishment, her former grave and stern-looking husband bad every appearance of being much amused with the meeting. I was bewildered; when Louisa exclaimed"Oh! I had quite forgotten, you indeed do not require any introduction. Madame' Von Lensdorff to-day wears the rose-coloured hat and shawl, so well impressed upon your memory."

"No, no, Louisa," Madame Von Lensdorff replied, "in truth it was but the romantic recollection of a dream, under the pleasant foliage of a walnut-tree. Gallant gentlemen, when truly awake, always respect the secrets of the fair sex."

- "A dream!" good-humouredly exclaimed the colonel. "That invention will not pass current with me; there was the positive fact of the pressure of a soft, white, and delicate hand, more soft, more white and delicate than—"
- "Stop!" I said; "I beseech your mercy;—you have too powerful an advantage over me."
- "Well, then," retorted Von Lensdorff, laughing, "the tables shall be turned, and I will give you an explanation. Know, then, that my wife is an old and dear friend of Louisa: they were educated in the same establishment at Paris, and have never since failed to keep up a regular correspondence. Your friends arrived in Coblentz, on the day after that on which you set out for Baden. Madame Von Lensdorff naturally was in great distress under the untoward circumstances to which the ridiculous garden scene had led; and you will allow, that my displeasure was not entirely reprehensible. Everything has turned out favourably. My wife's brother, a young lieutenant in our service, some few months back had been forced to absent himself from Ehrenbreitstein, in consequence of a duel, in which he had been engaged with a superior officer. In short, the consequences might have proved most serious, if it had been known that any part of his family had even indirectly communicated with him at that time; and, for this reason, all correspondence between him and his sister was carried on secretly, and without my knowledge or privity, for my situation and military rank

would have compelled me to have taken decisive steps for his immediate arrest, if I had suspected his being within the reach of the Prussian authorities. Thus, the whole mystery of my wife's visit to the welnut-tree, and her consequent and graceful invasion of your slumbers has been accounted for. Through the intervention of a kind and influential relation at Berlin. her brother's full pardon has been obtained; and as events, good or bad, seldom surprise us singly, we had the happiness of receiving this welcome intelligence yesterday, when I was immediately admitted to a participation in the secret, and to the knowledge of what had occurred. It only remains for me now, to offer you my hand in the spirit of friendship and harmony, and to declare, that whenever you please, I shall be ready to conduct you over the interior of Ehrenbreitstein, promising that you shall not again run the risk of being unceremoniously turned out of its gates, or of losing your credit; and that as long as one good bottle of Rüdesheimer remains in my cellar, you shall have full leisure to recount all the garden adventures you have ever met with in the whole course of your life."

"And will you not accept of my hand also in amity and good-will?" said Madame Von Lensdorff, in a pretended whisper; "although, perhaps, you will not find it now so fair or so delicate as that of the goddess of your dreams. And you must accept of this little peace offering, a token of my sincere repentance for all my offences towards you, either of commission or omission," added the lovely woman, as she slipped the well-remembered emerald ring from the finger. "Do not forget this emerald ring:—all I ask in return, is, that you will now finish that very gallant and agreeable speech, from which I so uncourteously withdrew in the garden.—Pray! do begin it again.—Was suchen sie, mein herzchen? Ich liebe sie, von ganzen herzen!"

"What do you allude to, my dear Agatha?" cried Louisa; "let me have an explanation. Pray, sir, why did you so rudely

keep us waiting, day after day, at Baden, when I wrote to you, to Rotterdam, mentioning, that we were anxious to visit our friends, the Lensdorffs, at Ehrenbreitstein."

"Good heaven! I quite forgot to ask for letters at the postoffice at Rotterdam;—but, Louisa, you must forgive me, and you must not be angry, when I declare, I shall always remember Ehrenbreitstein, the rose-coloured hat and shawl, and the walnut-tree."

A TALE OF VENICE.

BY CHARLES MAC FARLANE.

The sun was sinking behind the dark blue hills of Priuli, and lengthening the shadows of Venice across the rippling waves of the Adriatic, when two Senators, who were taking their evening promenade on one of the murazzi or outer terraces which the industry of man had gained and secured from a formidable element, perceived a trim galley on the purple line of the horizon, pressing forwards towards the city.

"That should be a vessel of the state," said one of the Signors; "from whence may she be?"

"Why not from Constantinople?" replied his companion; it is time that some of that conquering expedition should be returned to the 'Winged Lion.'"

"Saint Mark grant that it prove as you say!—But she keeps a gallant course, and will soon be here to speak for herself."

The two Senators, who though both advanced in years still glowed with that patriotic spirit which was destined to raise the low-sunk islets of Venice to such unprecedented glory, leaned against a parapet wall that ran along the edge of the murazzo, fixing their earnest gaze upon the vessel, which, rapidly advancing, grew in magnitude to their eyes at every minute. She had been labouring on with all her long oars; but now the sun had set, and an evening breeze, a vento di terra, from the lofty mountains of Dalmatia,

roughened the gulf. The sails, already set, were properly bent to catch the favouring wind, and another and another sail was hoisted, until the hulk seemed to bear the proportion to them that the body of the sea-fowl does to its widely spreading and pure white wings. Nor could the flight of the gull or the albatross be well more rapid or direct than the sailing of the Venetian galley. She rushed like "a thing of life" over the darkening waves, and presently the white foam was seen curling, and the phosphoric light flashing before her impetuous bow. As she neared, the last gleams of day showed the proud banner of the republic floating on her lofty stern.

"My Tebaldo—my son, my only one—fell a victim to the liquid and unextinguishable fire of the Greeks at the first siege of their heretical capital—but there are other fathers than me in Venice, and mothers who love their offspring, and wives who adore their husbands, and of a certainty for some of these there is great joy. The galley is the 'Corriere' of the great Dandolo, the swiftest vessel of our fleets, and she comes, the harbinger of happiness to thousands. The rest will not be far behind."

The Senator who pronounced these words began in a subdued and melancholy tone; but his voice strengthened and his eye flashed as he continued, losing in the bliss of others, and in the contemplation of the glory of his country, the sense of his private and irremediable misfortune.

"Viva San Marco! Viva la Santa Chiesa!—and the republic of Venice, that has placed the keys of Saint Peter within the boasted gates of Constantinople!" exclaimed the other Senator.

"Viva San Marco and the republic!" rejoined the childless man.

Their aged voices had scarcely ceased to vibrate, when a loud continuous shout—a shout of transporting joy and triumph, rose from the deck and the rigging of the galley, and made itself heard, despite of distance, and the lash and rose of the waves that broke in foam at the feet of the two Senators. The next instant that soul-stirring exclamation was answered by another shout that absolutely smothered, while it lasted, the sounds of wind and wave; and turning round, the Senators saw, on the edges of other terraces, and en the scattered islets that afforded the best points of observation, the mass of the population of Venice, gazing like themselves on the returning galley. In an instant numerous barks were seen to glide from the canali, and, dancing in fantastic groups over the heaving sea, to pull with strenuous oars towards the ship; the patriotism or the more private affections of many not brooking the delay of a few minutes, which would see her at anchor within Venice.

As she came on, with the breeze that still freshened singing through her shrouds, a simultaneous display of countless blue lights was launched from her deck high into the heavens, where the crescent moon, with "a single star at her side," seemed to smile at these testimonials of joy, and to welcome the wanderers back again. The mimies of heaven's thunders, the pealing cannons, were not yet known; but the roar of voices that again rose from the murazzi, and the ship, and the boats mid-way between them, might almost equal the rimbombo of artillery, than which it was infinitely more replete with meaning, for the united voices of thousands distinctly syllabled the patriotic cry, which was still—"Viva San Marco e la citta di Venezia!"

There was silence for a while. The galley, now surrounded by the barks from the shore, glided round one of the islets which had intercepted the prospect, and presently the crew saw all the low houses of the town, with the clear domestic lights gleaming from their lattices, full before them. The transport that then bounded in the hearts of the wanderers, the shout that then rose from the galley deck, must have been intense—

[&]quot;For what can consecrate the joys of home, Like one glad glance from ocean's troubled foam."

The two senators quitted the parapet, and repaired with hasty steps to the galley-quay, where they found many of their order, with most of the leading citizens, already assembled, and anxiously awaiting to speak with the gallant commander of the 'Corriere.' Soon the welcome vessel stood with her prow a few spans' length from the shore; and anon, with rapid manœuvres, she swung round, and lay with her broadside against the edge of the quay. Another shout and cry of triumph, and the captain leaped on shore, and bowed before the senators and citizens of Venice.

"Thou art welcome, Sanuti," said the foremost of the company; "thou art welcome as the confirmer of good tidings, but doubly welcome as a hero who has honoured his Venetian blood by his deeds before the walls of Constantinople!"

The Captain bowed more lowly than before. "The Scampa-via of Zani has then brought in safety our lord the Doge's despatches to the senate of Venice?" inquired he modestly.

"It has even done so much," replied the Senator; "and we have long since learned that the winged lion is flying for the second time over the walls of the capital of the East!"

"And long may it there fly," cried Sanuti, "and may the sons of Venice 'plant the lion'—the standard of San Marco and the republic, over many a conquest as fair as this!"

The assembled multitude echoed the words of the captain, and the air was rent by shouts of " *Pianta leone!*" the popular war-cry, which was indeed destined to be heard on many a foreign shore.

"But Sanuti," resumed the Senator who had already spoken, "what of the fleet? A portion certainly should be at Venice ere this, were it but to lay the trophies in the temple of our saint, under whom our arms have so prospered."

"I left the fleet to-day at noon—they had gained the height of Cape Torrela, and only let this fair breeze blow till midnight, and we shall see them at the rising of to-morrow's sun."

This news spread with the swiftness of lightning through the multitude, and thence through the whole city; and the childless Senator had predicted aright when he said "that for some there would be great joy in Venice on this night!" There was indeed too much joy - and alas! in many instances too much assured sorrow, or harrowing apprehension, to permit of sleep. The affectionate wife with tears in her eyes kissed the little slumberer in its cradle, or assured the half forgetful prattler on her knee that to-morrow he should see his father; or with provident care she turned over the humble treasures of her coffers, to select fitting raiment for her long absent spouse; or with diligent hands she prepared the restoring condiments, so welcome after the privations of a tedious sea-voyage, or she sought the draughts for the wine-cup which "maketh glad the heart of man." The fond mother, whose son had gone to the East, with the red-cross on his breast, rested not on her pillow, but gazing on the flickering lamp, asked a thousand times, "Oh! will the light of to-morrow's sun show me my boy in his strength and his beauty-or assure me that the light of life has for ever quitted his eyes!" The betrothed maiden, or she who had cherished a fond passion, paced her chamber floor with hurried steps, or, gazing out of her chamber on the sea waves, sighed to the strong winds that agitated them as love did her young bosom—" And will he come with the morrow? -and will he love me as when he went?"

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That short summer night seemed of interminable length at Venice; but the morrow came at last, and in the grey horizon, at the very point where the 'Corriere' had first appeared on the preceding evening, a broad white sail was seen. A sail, and another, and another, rose to the eye from that sober but brightening line, until the whole fleet was in

view, and advanced, the orb of day rising in their rear, like a vast flock of wild swans, glancing their long white necks and buoyant white wings in the golden beams of morning. In the city the matin summons to prayer sounded cheerfully on the ear, and in each Christian temple a song of thanksgiving succeeded the words of supplication. Our story is laid in very remote times; but it was not until these religious duties were performed, that the people of Venice began their preparations for the triumphal reception of their home-wending heroes, or hastened to meet the object of their hearts' warm affections. But when, in their weakness and insufficiency, they had paid their due to heaven, they entered on the business of life with zeal, and the city was agitated from one end to the other. Carpenters and other artisans were employed in laying stages for the warriors to tread upon, in their descent from the victorious galleys, or in erecting platforms whence the Venetian fair might wave their kerchiefs to the brave, or galleries whence the musicians might hail the return of those who had prevailed in the good fight, with the Lion and Saint Mark for their aid! Women and children ran to gather the scanty supply of verdure and of flowers that the sea-girt city afforded; but others were dispatched to the main land, to draw the laurel and the rose from the banks of the Brenta.

Inanimate nature seemed to partake in the joy and triumph of man, and a bright exhilarating sun, a gay blue sky, a sea serene, and a breeze as gentle as the zigh of happy love, were propitions to Venice and her day of rejoicing.

Meanwhile the fleet came on, spread out into the figure of a crescent. Every ship was distinctly visible through that fine transparent atmosphere; and as they glided over the placed waters towards their place of rest, the appropriate banner of each was clearly seen, and the impatient citizens on shore could tell the particular galley in which had sailed a son, a brother, or a friend. How many hearts beat at this recognition. "There is the Stella!" cried an old man, "my

own brave boy commands there!" "And there the Speranza!" cried another, "and, God be praised! my Francesco's flag still floats on her mast head!" Exclamations like these, and the eloquent outpourings of natural affection, were heard every moment to proceed from the congregated thousands, whilst the speaking faces, the expressive Italian countenances there collected, offered to the eye a picture on which the artist might have dwelt with apprehension and delight.

The fleet was now so near, that the sounds of their warlike music were heard, and every detail, to use the language of the painter, was distinctly made out. The bright and painted shields of the returning knights and squires were arranged on either side of the galleys; the warriors stood on the deck in their armour of mail, with the silver-inlaid morion on their heads, and the burnished arms in their hands - the broad lance - the battle-axe, and the steeltipped mace, threw back the rays of the sun with dazzling brightness; the "winged kion," the standard of the republic, flew over their heads; the bannerets of the patrician families of Venice floated on the elevated stern-quarter of the war ships; whilst the principal galley, "which had borne the blind old Dandolo" to the scene of his glory, was distinguished by a vast white banner, on which was inscribed in letters of gold, the new, the proud, "the singular but accurate title" * of "Lord of three-eighths of the Roman Empire" assumed by the conquering Doge, and afterwards retained by the Venetian republic. +

The instruments of the musicians, of which only the more clangons, as the cymbal or the trumpet, had at first been heard, now were all mingled and audible; with each passing moment they waxed louder and louder, until they burst on the ear with an overpowering peal—an air of war and tri-

[†] The style of the Doges of Venice afterwards was, "Dominus quarte partis et dimidiæ imperii Romani." And this remained unchanged till Giovanni Dellino, who was elected in 1866.



^{*} See Hallam's History of the Middle Ages, vol. i. chap. 3. part ii.

umph, to which the voices of the warriors and mariners formed an accompaniment. Then there rose to heaven a shout from those on shore that made Venice to ring through her hundred islets, and the cymbal and the harp, "the shrill trump, the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife," gave back a response to the galleys that, "gilded by the sun, and reflected by the waters," now first approached land.

On shore, as on the sea, the spectacle was imposing. Venice, indeed, was not yet the splendid city that claimed the world's admiration; she could not yet boast that accumulation of ancient and modern art, which was afterwards to attract the stranger from many a distant land; but so early as this, or at the commencement of the thirteenth century, Venice was a city of importance—as remarkable as she ever could be, from her peculiar situation-even beautiful and stately if compared with the cities, her cotemporaries, in any other part of the world than Italy. The Campanile, or lofty tower of St. Mark, did not yet pierce the clouds, nor did the temple then offer to the observer's eye that striking mixture of Greek and Saracenic architecture, those longextending rows of arches, that forest of columns, all of precious marble, those beautiful mosaics, and that general richness and vastness, which resulted from after-ages of commerce, wealth, and genius. But the bones of the blessed Apostle,-of the Evangelist whose name, says a Venetian historian, is associated with all the glories of the republic, had reposed there ever since the eighth century; and the devotion of the Venetians had raised over those sacred relics an edifice really vast in dimensions, and not destitute of beauty. The obelisks of granite, and the elaborately sculptured pillars, stood not yet in the piazza or the piazzetta; the horses of bronze—those obsequious followers in the train of victory—those records of the mutability of fortune, stood not yet over the door of the temple, though they were soon to be there, for it was this returning fleet that brought them as a trophy from captured Constantinople. In fine, Egypt and

Syria, Greece and the isles of Greece, had not yet been conquered and despoiled of their glorious remains to ornament the proud "Sea Cybele;" but, at the same time, some objects of art and antiquity had been imported; some improvement from the study of them had been introduced in architecture and sculpture; and Italian genius, destined in aftercenturies to rival that of Hellas, had begun to dawn, and Italian taste to show itself in the construction of their habitations, their churches, and public edifices.

It might be said, perhaps, that at the epoch of our tale, Venice was about equi-distant from what she was at her humble origin,—a collection of low huts scattered on the sea-lashed sand-banks and rocks, whose poor inhabitants, Cassiodorius, the minister of Theodoric, compared to "waterfowl who had fixed their nests on the bosom of the waves"—and what she became after the sixteenth century, when the wealth of the East had been poured in her lap, and the genius of Palladio and others had filled her with beauty.

But the moral picture offered to Venice at that period, was, perhaps, far more interesting and worthy of admiration. In Venice "the art and spirit of commercial industry had revived, and was then extending its Briarean arms to every shore of the Mediterranean. On the perilous career of conquest she had entered with great eclat, and, considering her origin and position, the influence she exercised on the politics of the south and east of Europe was astonishing. The banners of three subject nations did not yet float before St. Mark's; but an emperor had knelt there—a pope had been the guest of the republic, and his gratitude had invested Venice with the nuptial ring with which, on each succeeding year, she was to espouse the Adriatic—which she was to wear as the absolute mistress and sovereign of the seas.

The glorious dawn of liberty among the neighbours of Venice, the Lombard cities—that dawn that was destined never to reach its meridian splendour, but to expire in the

night of a despicable and enduring slavery-was even then a faint light compared to that which emanated from the liberal institutions of the republic, where a hard-hearted oligarchy, anxious, indeed, for the glory of the state, but indifferent to human suffering and crime, had not yet seized absolute power, nor sent its victims in mystery across the "Bridge of Sighs." The city of the isles might at this period be compared to a hero, who, still young, had gallantly advanced on the career of glory; whose aspirations were lofty, whose shield was not bedimmed with blood; who had not yet acquired and abused (alas! why should one be consequent on the other!) extensive and uncontrolled power; to whose future successes one might look with confidence; and we, at the distance of centuries, may also partake in the enthusiasm of the old chroniclers who record the triumph of her conquering sons returned from Constantinople.

The piazzetta, which is situated by the side of the church of Saint Mark, then contained the principal edifices of the republic, and it was here the knights and the captains of the galleys, that had now come to anchor close to the quay, descended by stairs and platforms prepared for them, and covered with laurels and flowers, banners and silks of Tyrian dye-and it was here their anxious feet again touched their native soil, and their relatives and friends received them to their passionate embrace. As one by one they stepped on shore, the people rent the air with their exclamations; the signiors of the republic, in an open balcony, bowed to them, as a herald repeated their distinguished names; whilst the bands of music pealed the notes of triumph, and the fair daughters of Venice "looked and smiled a welcome." The general picture of joy and grief-and grief there was in the midst of all these rejoicings, for many returned not to bless the eyes of affection, but remained in the country they had conquered, and many had sped to those regions whence there is no return—this general picture would be far too vast even

to be sketched here, and thus we will attach ourselves to the fortunes and feelings of one who figured in this day's pageantry.

Gherardo was the only son of the patrician Zani and the most gallant youth of Venice. His love of military glory must have been great, for when the Doge, the incomparable Enrico Dandolo, invited him to follow his banner to the East, he was betrothed to Bianca Celsi, as distinguished for her beauty, as he for his valour. Yet, on the threshold of the hymeneal temple, he did not hesitate; he would go where glory and his countrymen summoned him; when the Doge's exploits were achieved, he would return to Venice, and, more deserving of her, lay the laurels at the feet of his young bride. He had been, he had prospered-Constantinople had witnessed his valour-and now, returned, the piazzetta echoed with the name of Gherardo. He had received the embrace of his aged father without alarm at his tears-for overwrought joy will weep even as sorrow does: he had been pressed in the arms of the friends of his house and his infancy; and he now advanced to a gentler circle, composed of his female relatives and friends, who, stationed at a balcony, murmured the hero's name, and his welcome back to Venice. But, what means this omission? - Bianca was not among them-Bianca, his spouse, was not there to welcome him with eye and tongue. His voice trembled as he hurriedly asked where she was. An inconsiderate and cruel voice in the crowd answered, "Bianca is no more! she sleeps with her father in the church of Saint Theodore."*

"No more!" moaned the young warrior, and his flushed face became pale as monumental marble; and, but for his friends, he had fallen to the earth like one struck by lightning. When he partially recovered from the first shock, he again raised his eyes to the ladies' balcony; she was indeed not there—where she must have been had life and love

^{*} St. Theodore was the patron saint of Venice before St. Mark.

animated her. That absence confirmed the truth of the illomened voice; his eyes dropped despondingly to the earth, where, now in his youth and his glory, he could have wished to see a grave open for himself. His old father fell on his neck and wept aloud.

For some moments the mind of Gherardo wandered, and his soul was benumbed; but the sight of Alessio, the brother of Bianca, advancing through the crowd, recalled him to consciousness and anguish. "Is it even as they say?" cried he hoarsely, and stretching out his hand to his friend. Alessio grasped his hand with one of his, and, dashing away the tears from his averted face with the other, he replied in a suffocated voice, "Alas! and alas! it is even so—Bianca expired yesterday; and as the galley, your precursor, was appearing, my sister was on her road to the sepulchre!"

Such irremediable wo where so much bliss was expected—such an awakening from all the ecstatic dreams and aspirations that had given him strength in battle, and cheered him over the tedious or stormy waves—such a return—such a welcome—such an end to all his fond and passionate hopes was not to be supported. With a deep groan he swooned away, and the young hero, so lately the happiest among the happy—the most animated where all were animated, was borne in a lifeless state to the sad halls of his father.

It was long ere he returned to life and reason; and oh, how dreadful was his return to the latter! He would have given the world for some opiate or drug capable of repelling thought and recollection. He closed his eyes to the gay light of the sun—he would have shut out its rays for ever! He was deaf to the assiduous advice and consolation of his friends who thronged about him—he was mute, too, and asked not a single question as to the malady or decease of his bride. Was it not enough to know that she was for ever torn from him—dead!—what mattered the mode or the circumstances that had led to such a fearful result? At last he spoke, but it was only to request his father that he might be left alone. The

afflicted Signior, with words of affectionate condolence, and prayers that his son would raise his thoughts to the contemplation of that Being in whose hands were life and death, and to whose omnipotent will it was duty to submit, left the room with tears, and was followed by all the company. When, in the silence and solitude of his own chamber, Gherardo looked around him, he felt more than ever the extent of his loss. He rose from the couch on which he had been reclining, and advanced to a curtained recess at the end of the room-he drew the curtains-the sight was a cruel one! There was the talamo, or splendid nuptial bed, his friends had prepared and decorated for his return—there, on the rich velvet and the flowing silk, were the embroidered rosewreaths mixed with the laurel crowns, and the initials of his name entwined with those of the name of his Bianca. And hungry death was feeding on her roses, and her name, in the mouths of men, had become a note of wo-in his ear, a sound of despair! He threw himself on the ground at the bed's foot, and, burying his burning face in his hands, gave vent for the first time to a copious flood of tears.

As thus he lay, humbled in the dust, with all his thoughts in the dark and narrow grave, the sun shone brightly on Venice, and her thronging thousands, replete with joy, sang their songs of triumph and shouted the names of their gallant warriors and the captains of their galleys. It could not be that his should be forgotten, for who had borne himself more bravely than he; and as a crowd passed in front of his paternal abode, their united voices proclaimed "Gherardo! Gherardo! Long life and glory to Gherardo, the soldier of St. Mark!" The sounds struck his ears, but now they could elicit only a bitter smile.

The passing hours did not restore tranquillity to the bereft bridegroom; but, as the shades of night descended, a wild idea,—an uncontrollable impulse invaded him. "And shall my fond eyes obtain not a last glance of that being of love and beauty? Shall my Bianca?" reasoned the passionate youth (if such movements of the feelings can be called reason)—"my betrothed, be consumed by vile worms, and I not see the loveliness she must have carried to the grave? She died but yesterday—she must still be beautiful!—Yes! I will see her once again! I will once again press those lips, though they be cold—cold!"

At a late hour he secretly left his father's house for the well-known church-alas! he was to have been married there! A handful of gold gained over the sacristano, who unlocked the door of the temple and retired. Gherardo stood alone, a few paces from Bianca's tomb. A few lamps burned here and there dimly before the effigies of the Virgin Mother and of the more conspicuous saints; the moon shed an uncertain light through the painted glass of the lofty and narrow Gothic windows; but away among the massy columns, and through the long aisles of the church, there fell the obscurity of "the valley of the shadow of death;" and sounds there were none, save the fast-coming sighs of the hapless lover. The hour, the spot, the awful stillness, were all calculated to overpower the mind with indescribable emotion; the age was one of extreme superstition, and our young soldier's philosophy had not taught him to rise superior to the popular credence; the state of his feelings, too-and nothing is more imaginative or creative of ideal horrors than a certain stage of grief-contributed to delude the senses: and as the cressets trembled, and the moonlight, strangely coloured by the stained glass through which it passed, gleamed now brighter, and now fainter-now resting on this object of somewhat grotesque architecture of the church, now on that—he saw, or fancied, the spirits of the departed rising one by one, and mournfully waving their hands, as if warning him against a sacrilegious intrusion on the regions of the dead. Through the postern door by which he had entered, and which the sacristano had left a-jar, there suddenly blew a gust of the fresh night-breeze, that, moaning among the columns and over the hollow marble pavement

of the church, sounded in his ear like a voice, but not of earth-like the united lamentations of sad, or guilt-burdened spirits. He clung to one of the pillars for support, and was for some moments incapable of motion. His natural courage, and the intenseness of the feeling and purpose that had brought him thither, soon, however, came to his aid, and he strode with basty steps to the cappella, or lateral recess of the temple, beneath which was the tomb of his bride's family. Here, in this deep recess, the moon could not shed a - beam; but he was guided to the door of the sepulchre by a lamp that flickered on the altar of the cappella. Hurried, breathless, he laid his hand upon that door; massy, and bound with heavy iron and with bronze, it required a great effort to open it—he pressed his muscular shoulder against it—it receded; but as it turned on its unwilling hinges, it produced a hoarse rumbling sound that echoed like thunder in the vault beneath, and caused him to start back with trembling limbs and cold sweat on his brow. Again, however, desperation—love—the determination to see the lifeless form of his beloved, conquered his awe and the repugnance for disturbing the peace of the grave; yet he paused, ere he plunged into the horrible, palpable obscurity that lay beyond the door of the tomb, and, crossing himself, murmured a prayer to the blessed Virgin who saw his wo, and might pity or pardon his sacrilegious audacity. He then rushed down a few steps through a short dark passage,-and, himself like a spectre, entered the narrow chamber of death. lamp beneath a crucifix burned at the head of the avello or sarcophagus of Bianca, and a grated window near the roof of the vault admitted the rays of the moon, that fell almost perpendicularly on that cold white marble. He grasped at once the heavy cover of the coffin-had he hesitated, he might have been effectually deterred from completing his sad, wild enterprise. His nervous arms removed the weight, and then his eyes rested on the shrouded form of his Bianca, whose head was enveloped in a veil of pure white, and her "decent limbs composed" beneath an ample white robe. His brain rected at the sight—and the lamp which he had grasped fell from his hand.

When he recovered strength to proceed, the light from the grated window fell full in the open coffin; and, as his trembling hands withdrew the veil, a clear broad ray of the moon illumined the face of his lovely bride.* ** And could this be death?—Why even thus she looked when life and love coursed through her young veins!-even thus, when after a day of joy she slept a balmy sleep, a night of peace! And were not the long loose tresses crossed on her innocent bosom the same as erst-and the pale smooth brow, and the broad eye-lids, with their long black fringes, and the cherub mouth, with lips slightly apart, as if smiling in some blissful dream! "No, this cannot be death!" cried Gherardo, deliriously; "She sleeps-she only sleeps!-Oh wake! in pity, wake, my Bianca-my love-my wife!" He was silent for a moment, and gazed on her beautiful moon-lit countenance, as if expecting she would really rise at his passionate adjura-"Bianca!" continued he, "my own Bianca! why dost thou slumber thus !--dost thou await the warm kisses of thy lover to awaken thee? I give them thee!" and throwing himself across the marble coffin, he pressed his quivering lips to But how did his whole soul rush to his mouth, when he fancied he felt the breath of life on those pale lips! pressed them again—if it was a delusion, it continued—for the mildest, the most subdued of breathings seemed to pass from her lips to his. He raised her from the sarcophagushe placed his hand on her heart—and language has no power to paint his emotions, when he felt-plainly felt that heart palpitate beneath his hand! Another moment, and her eyes opened, whilst a low murmur escaped her lips. Gherardo clasped her wildly in his embrace, and leaned for support against the sarcophagus, where, as they stood, mute, motionless, and pale, almost like statues, in the moon-light, it would have been difficult to tell which of the two, or

whether both, had not been awakened from the sleep of death.

The Chronicler's tale is told. The ignorance of the physicians, and the immediate sepulture after death, usual in the south, had consigned Bianca to the grave, from which the passion and impetuosity of her lover saved her so opportunely. The fair Venetian passed almost at once from the marble sarcophagus to the nuptial bed of silk and velvet. The church, where the echoes of her funeral dirge might almost seem yet to linger, pealed with the notes of her hymeneals; and her bridal coronet of white roses was supplied by the tree that had furnished flowers for her funeral.

FIROUZ-ABDEL.

A TALE OF THE UPAS TREE.

BY DAVID LYNDSAY.

URGE me not, oh friend of a little morn, again to look abroad into that world, from which I have had the courage to banish myself for ever. Pity me not, for it is not I who am the exile, but the world which I have shut out from my kingdom. I am a Sovereign Prince triumphant over rebels, and have driven for ever from my presence, the children of your earth—fraud, oppression, and falsehood. Is it not better to live among savages, than to die by the hands of civilized men? Such would have been my destiny, for such was the doom from which I escaped to this prison of the sea, and its wild, but still human inhabitants.

What are the advantages of which you so often speak—talent, rank, birth? Alas! I regarded them once, but it was before the air of the Poison Tree had blown away the film from mine eyes, and taught me the reality of their value; ere I had knocked at the gates of death, and glanced into that world where such dross is trampled under foot. O truth, hardly won; knowledge, dearly purchased, thou hast really become priceless to me; thou art, indeed, the source of true wisdom.

For the history of my family it may suffice to tell thee, that in one of the popular commotions unhappily so frequent in Ispahan, my father, Esref Khan, of the royal house, retired from the fruitful banks of the Zenderhend, never more to revisit them, in order to preserve his beloved wife and infant

son from the effects of the hatred of his ungrateful country; having found it impossible to deliver her against her will, or to rend from her shoulders the yoke into which she had voluntarily thrust her neck. Java presented us a refuge, and an alliance with its native Prince gave us claims upon his hospitality: they were admitted; and there, cheered by the welcome of the just Sultan, we made ourselves a happy home, for upwards of twenty years.

The Monarch, beneath whose unfolded wing we daily eat our meal in peace, ascended at length to drink of the Odoriferous River, upon whose banks the just of Mahomet indulge in everlasting repose. The sceptre was bequeathed to his son, who had grown with my growth, and whom my soul loved with a love passing all the fondness of brotherhood. I wept not when my benefactor died, for the crown glittered on the brow of my friend, the friend of all mankind; and I fondly deemed that the deeds of the son would surpass in virtue those of the father.

Then what delight did not the first days of his power shed upon the heart of his brother! The world was to be blessed through the counsels of Firouz. For him, nothing was too great. The seal of the minister, the truncheon of the general, courted his acceptance;—Cingallah thought that all was insufficient for his friend; but I knew too well the inexperience of youth, to hazard the safety of my sovereign and the country by an eager acceptance of his splendid offers. I merely asked permission, under able leaders, to draw my sword against the enemies of my Prince, and the command of the body-guards; and the readiness with which this request was immediately conceded, testified at once his assent to my wishes, and his approbation of the moderation I had manifested.

But the unwillingness I had exhibited to take precedence of more deserving men, did not preserve me from the suspicions of the very people I had thus endeavoured to conciliate; the Vizier frowned on me, because, though the secrets of state were his, the secrets of the royal heart were mine; and the General could never be prevailed on to pardon the injury I had done him, in preserving the life of the Sultan, when he was employed in fulfilling his duty elsewhere. Thus I found I had created enemies where I had sought to make friends, and had myself armed their hands with the weapons with which they thirsted to destroy me.

But the Sultan loved me. Cingallah was the friend of Firouz, and spurned indignantly all accusations against me. Like snow on the ocean fell the words of the ungrateful on his ear. His confidence was as boundless as his favour; but oh! how little did I anticipate that both would one day become so dangerous to my safety.

In the midst of my security, and the happiness diffused over the country by its steady faith in the virtues of the king, one brow alone was clouded, one eye alone was dimmed by ceaseless tears, and that was the sovereign's own. A strange depression fell upon his spirit, mirth wearied, business disgusted him;—he loathed society, disdained repose, and became a heart-stricken and a lonely man; a stranger amid his kinsmen, and a wanderer in the bosom of his native land. I alone, of all who surrounded him, ventured to seek the cause of his hidden grief; but though not harsh, he was peremptory, and continued to persist in his painful silence. felt deeply for his malady, but I felt also, that I had to lament his dereliction of the noble virtues which I believed him to possess, when I beheld an aged counsellor of his father led out to die, for a trifling opposition to his will. Still I was beloved with a love that made me tremble, since it soon became apparent to me, that his favours were afforded less as marks of regard to me, than for the purpose of mortifying his haughty minister; many of the honours he conferred upon me being utterly inconsistent with the laws of the empire, and the customs of the people. It was in this spirit, I believe, that he one day proposed to me an indulgence which no subject had ever before enjoyed: he wished, he said, to introduce

me into his harem, to the society of his favourite wife and beloved niece, that he might unite all those who were most dear to his heart, in the bonds of affection around him.

Behold me, then, the envied guest of Sultanas and Princesses. Alas! in those bowers of beauty I saw but one form, heard but one voice; there was but one vision that impressed itself on my heart, but that was in characters never to be effaced. The miserable Firouz stood on the threshold of Heaven, yet beheld the gates for ever closed against him; he dared to look on the eyes of Zuleika, and received the punishment due to his presumption. The niece of my sovereign became the beloved of my heart, his favourite niece, her whose love he held too precious for princes. The blandishments of the chief Sultana had not the power to divert the melancholy of the sovereign, but all vanished before the smile of Zuleika; she scattered light upon his path, and he dwelt delighted in its radiance; but when that light was withdrawn, all was dark and chaotic.

Many times did he question me as to what were my opinions of his beloved niece. Alas! to all I thought, I dared not give utterance; yet, I found he was not displeased with the fervour of my expressions. Should it be so,—in the blind confidence of youth I dreamed, should it be that he designs her for my bride! The thought was too rich in transport—I felt that I should die at his feet, should I hear his lips pronounce these words; and Zuleika, should she deign—madman that I was, how wild and wandering were these dreams.

The Princess had frequently lamented to me the despair of Cingallah. No one could divine his secret, I related to him the anxiety of his niece, and implored him to trust his sorrow to her sympathy. His eyes brightened at the thought, but he rejected my advice. "No, I will trust thee, Firouz, for well do I know thy fidelity. Oh my friend, this populous empire contains no such wretch as Cingallah's self, no such miserable, such hopeless being. I love, Firouz, I love her without

a hope, with the dreadful consciousness that she whom I adore will but abhor me for the affection I, bear her. I have struggled fiercely against this passion, but in vain;—I can now strive no longer. While I had a prospect of freeing myself from its trammels, I revealed to no man the secret of my grief. Now that I determine to resist it no longer, into thy bosom, Firouz, I pour my sorrow, and entreat thy sympathy. Speak to her I love, tell her how her sovereign suffers, how her monarch worships;—speak to her, Firouz: the honey of thy voice will prevail for me, and I shall owe my happiness to thy intercession.

"Lord of the heart of Firouz," said I, weeping as he wept, and suffering as he suffered, "command the powers of thy poor servant—yet, who is there among women who will not listen to the voice of passion breathed through a sovereign's lips, and that sovereign, Cingallah!" "Zuleika will not," he, answered, in a despairing tone; "Zuleika will abhor my love and tremble at the forbidden tie:—yet, plead for me, Firouz, plead for me,"—he added, "I love Zuleika, I cannot exist without her—without Zuleika I die."

Did he look on me as he uttered these dreadful words? Did he see my chilled brow, my pale cheek, and quivering lip, while he thus conjured me to stain the purity of her whom mine own soul loved? O, wretch, wretch! he did behold mine agony, mine utter loathing, and yet he urged me still!—"I know it is forbidden," said he, "I knew that thou wouldst shrink from the task;—but what are sovereigns, if their wills are bounded as those of a subject? or friends, if they hasard nothing for those they love? Firouz-Abdel, thy gratitude, thy obedience, is mine: obey me in this; show thy friendship for me in yielding thine own will to mine; win Zuleika for me, for I know thou canst, and command what thou wilt in the empire of Java."

What did I not say to dissuade the madman from his purpose? Alas, I was compelled to submit, and in agony of soul I sought the harem of the Princess. At her feet I poured

forth the bitterness of my sorrow, and, with the tale of Cingallah's love, unconsciously did mine own confession flow from my lips; and not till I felt the tears of the Princess on my bosom, and her soft lip upon my brow, did I know that I had spoken, and was pardoned,—was even pitied and beloved.

But, Cingallah-alas! deception towards him was become necessary—almost a virtue. I returned to sooth his anguish, but I could not tell him that Zuleika had listened to his suit -I could not bear that even she should deem it possible she would hear so black a tale, but I bade him trust to time; and he was the more content that she knew and commiserated his sufferings. From this period I watched him till his form grew a horror to me, till his very voice was a curse-an unutterable loathing came over my spirit at the thought of him; and when, in my presence, he looked into the eyes, or touched the hand of Zuleika, I felt that I could have torn him in pieces on the spot; yet, mortal as was my hate, I was his very shadow-the fire in his bosom burned as intensely in minemy very face became like his in my agony:-- I was inseparable from him-I was his second self. At first, he courted the communion, but when he discovered that from this cause he could never behold Zuleika alone, it grew oppressive: he first frowned on my assiduity, then coldly bade me spare myself such severe duty; and, when he found all unavailing, and Zuleika still shuddering at his love, he banished me sternly from his presence. Then it was that I grew desperate, and, affrighted at the thought of separation, bore Zuleika from the Palace to the territories of our Christian foes, and wedded her in secresy and sorrow.

I know not what were his thoughts when he first heard of our flight, but his deeds were deeds of horror. My enemies told him they had long suspected my fidelity, and he immediately caused them to be put to death for not communicating their suspicions before. His next thoughts were peace,

-peace with the Dutch at any price, so that his niece and her husband might be surrendered to his vengeance; but this was resisted, firmly resisted, and I felt that I was safe even among enemies. I would have left the island, not to endanger their safety; but this they would not permit, and I resigned myself to their wishes rather than appear to doubt the good faith which they had sworn to me. Still they assured me of their protection, until the offer of a fertile province satisfied them of their imprudence. In the dead of night, in full confidence of security in the arms of Zuleika, did the guards of the Sultan surround my couch, and drag me in mockery to the earth. One deep, one dear revenge I tasted, even in that moment of inconceivable bitterness: I clove with my seymetar the head of the treacherous and inhospitable villain who led the soldiers to my chamber, and thus delivered up two innocent beings to destruction.

Oh! night of horror, upon which a day no less terrible was to dawn!-Zuleika was torn from my arms, and I was dragged alone to the Palace of Soura Charta; -there, after a mock trial, the voice of the Sultan condemned me to death for taking away the niece of the sovereign, and seeking refuge in the territories of his foes. To my anxious and agenized inquiries after my wife, I heard only that she was a prisoner, and that my death would release her from bondage. For this I was grateful; I was content to die, so that my death could benefit Zuleika: but then came the cruel mercy of Cingallah, disturbing my resignation, and beckoning me back to life;—I was offered the choice between instant death and the journey to the Upas Tree. At first I rejected the alternative, because I had been told my death would deliver Zuleika from further suffering, and I felt there was no charm in days which were to be passed apart from her; but this contempt of death was not agreeable to Cingallah: he caused it to be signified to me, that the Princess had, like myself, incurred the last dreadful penalty, but that the pardon of both, and our restoration to

favour and honours, should follow a successful journey to the Upas Tree. I then hesitated no longer—I accepted joyfully the alternative, and set forward immediately on my journey.

Like many others residing in the immediate vicinity of a wonder, I had never made any particular inquiries respecting the Upas Tree; I knew only, that many were sent, but few returned from that journey of death and horror—I had seen, too, a criminal expire at Tinkjoe from a gentle touch of a lancet imbued with the poisonous gum. I thought of his frightful convulsions, his dreadful shudderings, his bitter but unregarded cries; the livid spots that disfigured his swollen frame, and his rapid approach to dissolution; "but this is not the fate which I am about to encounter," said I—"I shall merely breathe the insalubrious air, and many helps will be given me to avert its baneful effects. Mahomet created the Tree of Death as a punishment for the guilty, not a scourge to the innocent:—I go, not because I have committed sin, but that I would have prevented it—what then have I to fear?"

It was in this manner I reasoned, and consoled myself during my journey to the Mountain Fort, where resides, in his lonely hut, the Priest of the fatal tree. "Another victim," said he, as I entered, "another victim: it was but yesterday—so young—alas, how much doth mortal crime increase!"—"Mistake not, Father," I replied anxiously, "I am no criminal; I am a state victim, but have committed no fault deserving the punishment decreed to me."—"Still doth crime increase," said the old man, "still doth it gather strength; for if thou be guiltless, what are they who sent thee?" He retired as he spoke, and dismissing my guards to their stations, told them it would probably be some days ere I could depart, since there was no immediate prospect of a change of wind, without which it was not lawful for me to proceed upon the journey.

The excitation of my feelings had hitherto prevented my asking any questions, or even thinking rationally on the subject of the enterprise I had undertaken; but a night's rest in the cottage of the Priest calmed my spirits, and prepared me to

listen to his communications. He exhorted me to repentance and preparation for the death I might too surely expect in that wilderness of horror; and he checked my presumptuous hopes, by showing me the fatal Register of those who had gone, and those who had returned—of the latter, out of twenty there were only two! I did not even then despair; I confided (for I could not bear to be dealt with as a criminal) to the old man my eventful history. He had heard of the Prince Firouz, and the blessings which had once attended his name; and when he was made acquainted with my innocence, like me he felt a hope, that the Prophet would not suffer me to die the death of the murderer. I believed so too, and was resigned to my fate.

"To the region of horror for which you are about to depart," said the old man, "I shall conduct you nearly a league on your way, but it will not be until the breeze changes, so as to blow before you, and thus drive the effluvia of the Tree from your person. If such a wind should spring up, be prepared to set forward, travel as rapidly as you can, so as to return ere it again changes, which, if you can effect, you will be safe from its evil consequences. A hill to which I shall conduct you, you must pass—at its base, on the other side, flows the rivulet whose black and desolate banks will conduct you straight to the Tree; the poisonous gum you will find dropping from it in abundance; gather it quickly and return -stay not for observation, there is nothing to contemplate in the wilderness; nothing that hath life will meet thy wearied eye, for within five leagues of the Upas Tree no breathing thing can continue to live."

In such conversations as these, in directions for my conduct, and fervent prayer for my safety, was passed the first day of my sojourn at the mountain hut. On the morning of the second, the guard came to announce the arrival of a fellow-sufferer, another traveller to the valley of the shadow of death. The supposed criminal was yet at a distance, when the Priest descried the litter, which announced that he was



attended by some friend of high rank; and I began to conjecture that another victim of royal injustice was approaching the mountain. A sick throbbing came over my heart, but I hastened to descend and offer my melancholy greeting to the unfortunate stranger.

The litter had arrived at the door of the hut, but I looked in vain among the escort of the criminal for his chained and earth-bowed person. The curtains were opened, and the attendants bowed low as a majestic female stepped from it. I stood rooted to the earth, for I beheld Zuleika!

Frequently had her tears fallen over my brow, many times had her voice sounded in my ears, ere I could recall a recollection of what had befallen me, and I then turned an eager inquiring glance upon my smiling, gentle wife.—"It is even so," she replied, "the Sultan has deceived thee into the journey thou art about to encounter, for the fuller gratification of his revenge. His triumph would have been incomplete without my death; and, as he dared not openly spill the blood of his niece, he has sent me to attend thee hither: still there is mercy in his tyranny, though he meant it not; by the arrow, or the axe, thou wouldst have died alone, unaided, unpitied; and uncertain of my destiny now, my voice shall console thee, my lips shall encourage thee, and on thy bosom shall my last sigh be rendered! Husband of my soul, since the brittle glasses of our destiny must be broken, mercifully hath the Sultan dealt in shivering both at the same moment."

Vague and dark anticipations!—sad and fruitless lamentations! Their continued intrusion would not allow me to rejoice in the worshipped presence of Zuleika, while we remained together one day in the mountain hut. In the evening I was still listening to her soothing accents, when the Malay approached, and, with tears flowing down to his white beard, announced that the wind had now changed, and the hour had arrived at which we were to set forward on our perilous journey. On the plain around the house were assembled the

guard, a band of forty men, as well to do honour to the high rank of the Princess, as to prevent any intervention of the people in our favour. Alas! this was a groundless fear; not one of all my former friends even asked of me, "Whither goeth Firouz-Abdel?" A small quantity of food of a superior kind, together with a little cruise of water, were supplied to me by the guards; and the good Priest, under the pretence of some further instructions, drew me aside, and gave to my eager grasp a small skin of wine. "Take it fearlessly," said he, "and use it without scruple. Mahomet forbade it as the luxurious instigator to brutality, not as a precious medicine, the balmy restorer of exhausted life. Husband it well, yet fear not to use it in a world as desolate as that to which thou art going. Allah gave the secrets of its virtues to Noah, and bade it serve as a renewer of life to his aged and sorrowing frame! Take it, then, Firouz, in the name of that omnipresent God, who now hearkens to this conference, and looks down upon this act of his Priest without a frown!"

I could not bear to behold Zuleika, while they were covering her beautiful face with the cap and mask of leather, with which they conceal the persons of the criminals, from the head to the breast, and which has glasses placed directly before the eyes. I submitted to the horrible disguise, though revolting from the dress of a criminal, and went on with my other preparations: they were soon completed; the silver boxes for the poison were then given to us, the last prayers said for us, and, attended by the Priest and surrounded by the soldiery, we set forward on our journey.

The voice of the good Malay, and the trampling of the soldiers' feet, alone broke the chill silence which attended our departure. Zuleika spoke not, but I could see through the dim glasses which obscured their lustre, that her eyes were fixed on me. I was silent, and replied nothing to the consoling words of the Priest, for I was, in the madness of my despair, projecting an escape from the guards. I well knew

my swiftness of foot would bear me soon, even with Zuleika in my arms, beyond the reach of their cymetars, but I recollected their arrows tipped with the poisonous drug, and I thought with redoubled anguish of the shrieking, shuddering wretch whom I had seen expire from a lighter wound than could be inflicted by the arrow of the Javanese guard. will not hazard her life," said I,-"I will wait patiently for the departure of the soldiers, and then attempt some other mode of escape!" Probably the Priest divined what was passing in my thoughts; for he said to me in a whisper, "Dream not, oh hapless Firouz! of any hope of escape but that of returning from the tree;—the country is inaccessible on all sides save one, and that is so well guarded by the Sultan's troops, that an arrow in thy breast would be the first signal of thy danger, shouldst thou attempt it. Mountains rise on mountains to hide the accursed valley, and prevent its deadly mists from ascending to the skies, and blighting the verdure of the happy earth of man. Linger not then upon thy journey, O Firouz, but steadily follow the advice and directions I have given thee."

I sank again into the most bitter dejection at these words of the good Malay; for I knew, had there been the most remote hope of escape, he would not thus have discouraged it. His hut was as the distance of six leagues from the tree, and his office was to conduct us one league onward, near to the spot where the region of danger and death began.

The place at which we parted was the base of a bare and losty mountain, over a part of which lay the only accessible entrance to the valley. This we were told to ascend, and we were informed we should find on the other side a stream, whose windings, after a journey of five leagues, would lead us to the Upas Tree. All the other directions were once more repeated, and amidst the blessings of the Priest, and the good wishes of the soldiers, we sprang forward to ascend the hill.

Alas, dreary to the eye, and sad to the heart, was the aspect of the wilderness through which we had now to journey;

scattered near its entrance, we observed a few sickly young trees (for age is unknown in that valley), striving faintly to erect their drooping heads, and wear the complexion of nature; the few shrubs that grew around them were dwarfish and blistered, as if the lightning had passed over them in its wrath, and left the impression of its red wing upon them. The yellow arid grass here and there peeped upwards from among the crushing flints, and bent its feeble head before a breeze which could scarcely discompose one lock of Zuleika's clustered hair! Alas, alas! this was indeed the death-bed of nature.

Sad and sullen flowed the once-beauteous stream through the bare and desolate land. We looked into its depths, but nothing of life disturbed its horrible stillness.

Suddenly a new and strange sound broke upon the silence of the desolate valley! Hitherto, none had saluted our ears, save the sullen moanings of the poisoned stream; but this was of a different kind:—it was a light clattering noise, such as is made by the sea when its gentlest waves retreat to their bed over a bank of pebbles. I paused to listen. "Are we not alone in this desert," said I, "whence then can this noise arise?" I looked carefully around.—With horror I discovered that we were pursued by a huge snake, which was fast gaining upon our steps. To escape this danger we at once resolved to risk another, by ridding ourselves of the hated masks. With what joy did I again behold the sweet face of my love! But my fears for her safety interrupted the momentary bliss, and I urged our speedy flight.

Danger gave renewed strength to Zuleika's feeble limbs, and she sprang forward with a star-like swiftness. Hastily the serpent followed;—I saw his variegated hues glisten in the sun. He foamed, and erected his threatening head and ringed neck, as if indignant that beings so feeble should attempt to oppose his purpose; still he gained upon us. Zuleika slackened her pace, trembled, drooped—the snake was close behind us. I caught her up in my arms, and again

rushed forward some distance. It seemed as if this exertion of energy had intimidated the snake, for he pursued us with less rapidity than before. Zuleika, in these moments of peril, uttered no cry, no groan—but when the fleetness with which I ran, allowed me, from the distance I had gained, a moment's pause, her words were blissful and cheering. "See, my beloved," she exclaimed, "the mercy of Allah! he hath sent this snake not to destroy his trusting creatures, but as an assurance that the air is less deadly than we apprehended. Since this animal can live in the desert, let us receive the presence of the snake as an encouraging omen from Allah!"

Having gained the top of the hill, we looked abroad for the serpent; he was dragging his sinuous length in our path as swiftly as his ponderous bulk would permit:-suddenly he paused, reared his arched neck, and gazed earnestly towards us, as one resolving some terrible project which a moment's reflection was to realize. He then turned towards the melancholy stream, and, lowering his foaming jaws over the bank, drank long and deeply of its waters. Wearied in the pursuit, he sought to gather strength by his draught, to advance more rapidly upon his retreating prey. Again he encroached upon us, and again did I, with my beloved burthen, spring forward to descend the hill, and advance further into the valley. Still was the snake in pursuit-still he gained upon us-near! nearer! till I heard anew the clattering of his scales upon the flints as he glided along over their rough surface. "O, Allah! O, Zuleika!" I exclaimed, and in the very despair of my fear, turned round to oppose my foe;—he was arrested in his movements as suddenly as if that agonized glance had had the power of turning him to stone. and horrible hiss, a sound which seemed the natural language of this desolate land, was followed by what I believed to be a convulsive expression of agony;—he rolled himself on the earth; his eyes glared with an infernal magnificence, but the hues of his radiant robe grew momentarily more

dusky; his foam covered the sand, and his tail lashed the flint stones in impotent malignity, while his fiercely-erected head drooped lower and lower to the dust! I now began to understand the cause of this change: he had drunk of the empoisoned waters, and the black and sullen stream, though a deadly draught to him, had given life and hope to us. Suddenly he made one frantic effort; he gave a desperate bound, as at some imaginary prey, then sunk down in everlasting stillness, as torpid and colourless as the desert sand which received him.

Night came on—night which knows not darkness, descended softly upon the world, and soon the wan moon and the peaceful stars peeped out from amid the silent sky.

When we had passed with much difficulty and pain through the gloomy dell, we were again in the open country, and were induced to rest, while I contemplated the scene around me. All traces of vegetation had totally disappeared; the sullen stream flowed more silently, as well as more slowly, the brown sands had become black, and a dark livid hue had spread itself over the face of the mountains; the light breeze that had travelled before us, now seemed to have died away; not a shrub was to be seen, not a plant, not a blade of grass to comfort us with the assurance, "Children, ye yet walk on the bosom of your earth."

But had these been all the horrors of this region, we could still have born up against them. I knew by the ravine which we had passed, and the signs I have described, that half our journey was accomplished, and that we were within three leagues of the terrible Tree. The sad indications of its vicinity at length grew more apparent, as we were compelled frequently to step out of our path, to avoid treading on the mouldering remnants of humanity, bones and parts of skeletons, with which it was strewed. I endeavoured to divert the eyes of Zuleika from these objects. Alas! they multiplied; I flew from one but to encounter others more hideous

and fresher in their decay, for they appeared to cover the face of the land the nearer we approached the dreadful Tree.

The first rays of morning were beginning to shine faintly over the black and blasted mountains. I had hoped to have reached the Tree ere the day dawned, as night was fitter for our journeying than walking beneath the fervid rays of the sun; but I had overrated my powers, as well as those of the Princess, who had been totally unused to every kind of exertion. We were now very near to the Tree, and my anxiety to conceal the lassitude I felt creeping over me, made me hurry forward without reflection or prudence.

We continued our desolate journey with all possible expedition; a sudden winding of the river brought us into the presence of the majestic Upas, and our hearts bowed themselves in wonder and in fear before that awful throne of the royalty of death! Alone, black as the blackest night, shadowing even the livid mountain with a deeper hue, stood the earth-born death, the dispenser of almighty vengeance.

I took the little caskets from Zuleika, and requested her to remain stationary, while I gathered the gum from the Tree, deeming it unnecessary for her to hazard her person nearer. There was, I thought, an expression of agony in her face, when I prepared to leave her, but I smiled, and pointed encouragingly towards the near accomplishment of our task, when suddenly I saw (for it could surely be no illusion) the dark and massy branches of the majestic Tree bend themselves with a slow and gentle motion towards us, as in welcome, and at the same moment a soft light current of air swept gently over my face. "God be merciful!" I said in anguish,-" God be merciful! forsake us not now in this most awful moment!" I was sensible of a slight change in the wind, and I knew all the danger attending it, but my prayer found not a passage through my closed lips, for I would not alarm Zuleika.

I stood alone beneath the awful Tree which the danger forbade me to contemplate, and had already filled one casket

with the poisonous gum, which I held out triumphantly to the view of Zuleika!—but alas! her approving smile met me not, for she was extended prostrate on the burning sands;—I rushed towards her in uncontrollable agony, determining not to survive her. There was paleness on her lip and brow, and her hands were damp and cold. A slight convulsion passed over her features, yet she did not appear insensible. I sprinkled water upon her forehead, and forced a little wine between her lips. Slowly she recovered her speech. "Oh, my beloved," said she, "linger not thus over one whom thou canst not save, but who may destroy thee. One of the caskets thou hast filled: return to thy country, and leave me, for I shall never go hence. The kiss of the Upas is upon me, and I shall die in its terrible embrace. Oh! fly, my husband!—fly, and preserve thyself."

"Allah! Allah!" I cried aloud,—for my despair was redoubled in proportion as my hope had been sanguine—"Allah, what have I done to suffer thus? What hath this innocent committed, that she should thus die the death of a felon?"

I bowed my head to the earth as I spoke, and in the earnestness of prayer raised up my fainting wife to heaven, expecting, hoping instant death, or instant preservation. this moment a mighty wind arose and tore down the boughs of the terrible Tree, swaying its gigantic body away from its devoted victims—the dead stream spoke, rejoicing in the chill breeze which swept over its ravaging waters—the sand arose in whirlwinds—the rattling thunder was re-echoed by the mountains, while the foul mists of the Tree were devoured by the swift lightning. The voice of Zuleika, after a short space, speaking faintly, recalled my attention-"Art thou still near me, Firouz?" she said; "methought the reeling of the earth had separated thee from me-Is it thunder I hear?-Is that dreadful glare the lightning 2-Oh! Firouz!-Oh! husband adored! the Prophet comes in his vengeance: pray that he rend us not asunder!"-" He comes not, my beloved!" I cried in a voice of agony, "he comes not, for he cannot:-

fear not, look up, and know we shall yet be saved from destruction.

I saw, and knew that our danger was passed, for to this fearful convulsion of the elements we owed our safety. Beneath the very shade of the now powerless Upas did we stand, for Zuleika would not permit me again to leave her and fill the second casket.——

I will not be more minute in detailing the particulars of our journey-little further, in fact, occurred worthy of observation, and we resolved not to linger on our return. The tempest had so well cooled the air, and invigorated my exhausted frame, that I proceeded with redoubled strength, and carried my beloved sleeping on my bosom. We at length gained the hill, the last enclosure of the fatal valley; and when we had ascended to its top, and surveyed the frightful region we had quitted, contrasted with the green grass and smiling fields of the world of living man, we burst into tears of gratitude and joy, and, kneeling, dedicated our prayers and our souls to him who we believed had preserved us in the wilderness,—to Issa, the merciful and the mild. Zuleika's heart was with me in this act, my thought was her thought, her faith was mine; we had but one mind, as we had long had but one heart. Together we prayed-together we wept, and then, with a feeling I cannot describe, nor any, save beings suffering as we had suffered, imagine, we trod back our blissful path to the hut of the Malay Priest. He scarcely believed what he saw; and the guards were so struck by what they considered a miracle wrought by the sanctity of the Princess, that they bore us in their arms, shouting along the streets the mercy of Allah, till our progress assumed rather the form of a triumphal procession than the return of two criminals after sentence of death. Thus we reached the Palace of Soura Charta, our train increasing momentarily, for the people had risen in astonishment at the tidings, and insisted upon conducting us to the Sultan; they regarded it as a wondrous miracle in favonr of our virtue, that the storm, which had left marks of desolation among them, had been the means of preservation to us, and they kissed our garments with reverence, as peculiar favourites of their Prophet.

The Sultan received us with a gloomy astonishment, that almost looked like fear-I saw that he dared not assail us further. We placed our dearly won casket at his feet, and heard his hesitating lips pronounce our pardon. "Ye have fulfilled your sentence, and are free," he exclaimed, "live henceforward in the home of your fathers." "Sultan," I replied, "we have fulfilled the sentence of the law, but we have yet to receive its reward—we have two requests to prefer, which our sovereign is bound to concede; shall we ask and obtain?"-" Ask," he replied, gloomily, "I have no power to deny." "We will then no longer live in the land where our sufferings have been so severe; I ask, Lord of Java, permission to quit the island."--" And I to follow Firouz," said Zuleika; "great Sultan, is our petition granted?" "Go," returned the monarch, "go, and let me behold you no more." We retired from his presence. "I trust him not, Zuleika," I said; "nor will I breathe the air which his sceptred hand can reach—the desert, the savage, the wild beast, are welcome before erring man, gifted with boundless authority—now his fears are our protection; but hereafter -Let us fly, my beloved; Enganho shall receive us:-no In the enchanted isle, the love man will seek us there. of the ocean, which he hides in his jealous bosom from the prying wickedness of civilized man, we too shall be safethither we will go-fugitives we are, and oppressed, so haply the foam-girt bride of the sea will not raise her sons against us."

And she did not—we sought a refuge on the isle which our countrymen had thought it madness and death but to speak of; we conciliated its wild inhabitants, and the knowledge I took among them raised me to the rank of their chief—My palace in the heart of the island was erected by their

grateful hands, where Zuleika, a royal Queen, a beloved wife, resides with her innocent babes. I constantly visit this hut to warn off such strangers as attempt to land, or save them from the death they would inevitably incur without assistance from this island, and I have more than once been happy in my endeavours to preserve the lives of my fellow creatures; still there is no chance of any vessel approaching us without a pilot from Enganho, and to this circumstance, the superstition of Cingallah, and the cowardice of the Javanese, am I indebted for my safety under Issa the Merciful, whose eyes shine on the desert, and whose lips bless the savage.

THE END.





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